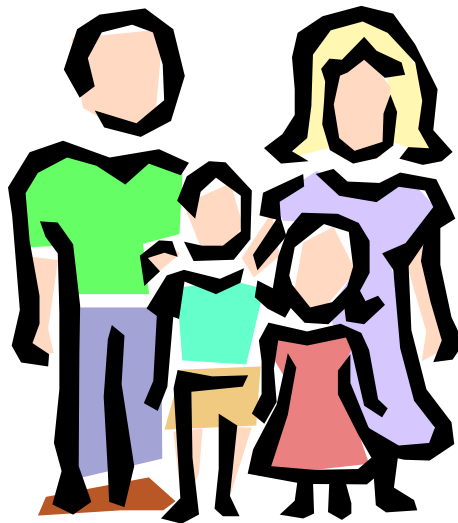


CALIFORNIA'S
TITLE IV-B
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN
ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT
FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2005
JUNE 30, 2005



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Children and Families Services Division
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**APSR
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Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While significant progress has been made to reach our goals, we realize that continued efforts to improve practice and outcomes for children and families are essential in order to meet the State's vision for child welfare practice. The State's efforts to examine and improve the child welfare services (CWS) system, as well as respond to the federal review with a Program Improvement Plan (PIP), have created a new urgency for developing a system that can provide a public accounting of outcomes for children and families. This report highlights progress made since the time of our last Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) (June 30, 2004) in implementing the changes needed to make this a reality. The report is the first APSR to the State's 5 year Child and Family Services Plan for federal fiscal years 2004 through 2009, which was approved on September 17, 2004.

As instructed by the federal guidance for the APSR, Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004, specific goals and objectives identified as part of the State's PIP have been included and addressed in this APSR. Contained in the PIP are the measurement methods for the goals and objectives. The State's PIP and the quarterly reports are available on the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) web site. The web site may be found at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cfsr/default.htm>. June 30, 2005 marks the end of our PIP; however, many of the activities contained in the PIP will continue and will be updated in subsequent APSRs.

While California is committed to improving outcomes for children and their families, it is clear that critical to the success of our improvement efforts will be adequate and flexible funding and resources and the active participation and collaboration with other stakeholders at the State, county, community and neighborhood levels.

California will continue, through the CWS System Improvements to make enhancements in the system that will promote the safety of children, promote their right to a stable permanent home, and to enhance their well-being. This year's major accomplishments in the implementation of the CWS System Improvements include the implementation by June 30 of the Standardized Safety Assessment System by the 11 pilot counties (see glossary), which is a consistent approach to the assessment of safety, risk, protective capacity and family strengths. The 11 pilot counties have also met their June 30, 2005 target date for the implementation of Differential Response in targeted communities and/or identified populations. These counties are utilizing the Statewide Safety Assessment System matrix for screening of safety, risk and family protective capacity. In addition, quality case planning and service delivery protocols have been developed and have begun implementation for a target population in each of the 11 pilot counties in order to meet the June 30, 2005 deadline.

The protocols were developed for three focus areas, which are intended to strengthen and ensure the success of the case plan, and improve outcomes for children. These focus areas are Team Decision-Making (see glossary), Family Participation in Case Planning and Youth Inclusion in Case Planning.

This year the State Interagency (Children's) Team (SIT) completed the defining of its role, increased the number of agencies participating and continued work on a variety of issues that impact children and families. The SIT is chaired by the CDSS, and is comprised of representatives overseeing programs effecting children from departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) such as the California Department of Health Services, the California Department of Mental Health, the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, the California Department of Developmental Services and the CDSS. In addition to those agencies, the California Department of Education, the Employment Development Department, the California Workforce Investment Board, the California Department of Justice and the Foundation Consortium are also participants. The SIT is charged with looking at cross-cutting issues for children, including supporting CWS System Improvements. Some of the issues the Team has been working on include the issue of confidentiality across systems, funding issues and access to services by families.

Through the "New Initiatives" training, the CDSS provided training to child welfare and probation supervisors on good case planning practice, including techniques to involve all family members in the case planning process. During the past year, "New Initiatives" training was provided to over 89 percent of child welfare and probation supervisors Statewide.

Further accomplishments in the area of training include the completion of a common core curriculum that was developed utilizing information obtained regarding current training practices, training needs and input from stakeholders to address the goals and objectives of the Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP). The curriculum has been tested and will be used to train all child welfare workers. Additionally, the curriculum for new child welfare supervisors has also been developed. This curriculum has also been piloted and will be used, commencing July 2005, for new child welfare supervisors.

Finally, California developed and fully implemented its new outcomes based quality assurance system, the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) this year. All counties received county specific outcome data, developed and submitted county self-assessments and submitted county self improvement plans to CDSS. Each self-assessment and county self improvement plan were reviewed by CDSS, and the self improvement plans were approved. In addition, we met our objective of completing Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCR) (see glossary) for at least 15 child welfare agencies by June 30, 2005.

California's Child Welfare Services System: Overview

California's Child Welfare Services System: Overview

California's state-supervised child welfare system is administered at the local level by 58 counties, each governed by a county board of supervisors. While there are challenges inherent in the complexity of this type of system, its central strength lies in the flexibility afforded each county to determine how best to meet the needs of its own children and families. As the most populous state in the country, California's rich culture and ethnic diversity includes 224 languages and 109 federally recognized Indian tribes. The State's counties differ widely by population; economic base; mix of urban, rural and suburban settings; and topographies that span desert, forest, mountain, coastal and inland valley formations. Within a single statutory and regulatory framework, these counties are charged with providing the full array of services necessary to meet the needs of at-risk children and families.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is the agency authorized by statute to promulgate regulations, policies and procedures necessary to implement the State's child welfare system and to ensure safety, permanency and well-being for California's children. The CDSS is responsible for the supervision and coordination of programs in California, funded under federal Titles IV-B, IV-E, and XX of the Social Security Act. Furthermore, the CDSS is responsible for developing the State's Child and Family Services Plan. These efforts are all achieved within a framework of collaboration with child welfare stakeholders. Due to its complexity and this high degree of collaboration, California's child welfare system is ever changing as it seeks to improve its ability to meet the needs of the State's children and families.

The Children and Family Services Division (the Division) of the CDSS plays a vital role in the development of policies and programs that implement the goals of CDSS mission. Oversight of the State's CWS system is the responsibility of the Division. In developing policies and programs, the Division collaborates with other State and local agencies, Tribal representatives, foster/kinship caregivers; foster youth, foster care service providers, community-based organizations, the Judicial Council, researchers, child advocates, the Legislature, and private foundations to maximize families' opportunities for success.

Child Welfare Services (CWS) System

The CWS system is the primary intervention resource for child abuse and neglect in California. Existing law provides for child welfare services which are directed toward the accomplishment of the following purposes: protecting and promoting the welfare of all children, including handicapped, homeless, and dependent children; preventing, remedying, or assisting in the resolution of problems that contribute to the exploitation or delinquency of children; preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families where the removal of the child(ren) can be prevented by identifying family needs and assisting families in resolving those issues that lead to child abuse and

neglect; reunifying families whose children have been removed, whenever possible by providing necessary services to the children and their families; maintaining family connections when removal cannot be prevented by identifying children for whom Tribal placement and relative placement are preferred and most appropriate; and assuring permanence for dependent children, who cannot be returned home, by promoting the timely adoption, guardianship or alternative permanent placement for these children.

Oversight of California's CWS system is provided by the various branches of the Division.

- The Child Protection and Family Support Branch (CPFSB) has primary responsibility for the emergency response, pre-placement and in-home services policy components, including child abuse prevention, and the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration projects. The CPFS Branch is also responsible for statewide training and staff development activities. The CPFSB includes oversight of statewide child abuse prevention and family support services. The child abuse prevention and family support services component of the service delivery system is administered by the CDSS' Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) within the Division. This component consists of a wide range of community-based services, including child abuse prevention and treatment services that promote the safety and well-being of children and families. These services are designed to increase family strengths and capacity to provide children with a stable and supportive family environment, and to enhance child development. OCAP serves as a statewide center for public and private child abuse prevention, intervention and treatment programs. OCAP also administers programs funded under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Child Abuse Prevention Grant (CAPG) and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Act.
- The Children Services Operations and Evaluation (CSOE) Branch is responsible for maintaining the integrity of child and family services by monitoring the uniform implementation of laws and regulations governing the provision of child welfare services by the 58 California counties. In addition, this branch has primary responsibility for the implementation of the CWS System Improvements; the C-CFSR; operating State Adoption District Offices; reviewing, maintaining, managing and ensuring the confidentiality of all California adoption records; and providing post adoption services.
- The Child and Youth Permanency (CYP) Branch supervises the delivery of services to children removed from their homes and placed into foster care or kinship care. The CYP Branch responsibilities include program management through regulation development and policy directives related to out-of-home care and permanency for dependent children.
- The Case Management System (CMS) Support Branch is responsible for providing support, and oversight of the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS). The CWS/CMS is a personal computer (PC)-

based Windows™ application that supports the case management business needs of all of California's child welfare social workers. As the CDSS' primary point of contact for CWS/CMS, the CMS Support Branch is responsible for facilitating the development of CWS programmatic changes and improvements to the system, pursuant to State and federal policy and regulation. The CMS Support Branch also works closely with the counties to assure programmatic consistency and clarity and to respond to collective county questions regarding system policy.

- The Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch is responsible for ensuring that children placed into foster care in group homes and by foster family agencies are receiving the services for which providers are being paid; that provider payment levels are established appropriately; that overpayments are minimized; and that federal, State and county payment and funding systems are appropriately administered.

The following major components comprise the CWS system:

Prevention: service delivery and family engagement processes designed to mitigate the circumstances leading to child maltreatment before it occurs.

Emergency Response: a response system designed to provide in-person response, 24 hours a day, to reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation for the purpose of investigation and to determine the necessity for providing initial intake services and crisis intervention to maintain the child safely in his/her own home, or to protect the safety of the child through emergency removal and foster care placement.

Family Maintenance: time-limited services that are designed to provide in-home protective services to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation for the purpose of preventing the separation of children from their families.

Family Preservation: intensive services for families whose children, without such services, would be subject to risk of out-of-home placement, would remain in existing out-of-home placements for longer periods of time, or would be placed in a more restrictive out-of-home placement.

Family Reunification: time-limited services to children in out-of-home care to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation when the child cannot remain safely at home and needs temporary foster care while services are provided to reunite the family.

Foster Care: services designed to serve and protect those children who cannot remain in their homes. Current placement options include family homes (relatives or foster family homes), certified homes of foster family agencies and group homes. Foster care maintenance also includes payments to cover the cost of providing food, clothing, shelter, daily supervision, school supplies, a child's personal incidentals and reasonable travel, including travel to the child's home for visitation.

Permanent Placement: alternative family structures for children who, because of abuse, neglect or exploitation cannot remain safely at home, and/or who are unlikely ever to return home. These services are provided when there has been a judicial determination of a permanent plan for adoption, legal guardianship (including the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program), independent living arrangement for adolescent children, or other alternative permanent placement.

When adoption is the permanent plan for a child, potential adoptive families are home studied, approved and children are placed with them. Services include recruitment of potential adoptive parents; financial assistance to adoptive parents to assist in the support of special needs children; and direct relinquishment and independent adoption.

Independent Living: education and services for foster youth based on an assessment of needs and designed to help youth transition successfully from foster care to living independently. Services are provided to enhance basic living skills, as well as career development skills.

**PIP Outcome:
Safety**

Safety

Safety for children is an important part of the State's vision for children and families and a measurable outcome of the State's child welfare system (CWS) system. California strives to ensure that children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect and that they are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Child Safety Outcomes

Over the last two decades, California has experienced high numbers of child abuse reports that have grown increasingly complex and challenging to the CWS system's capacity to respond effectively. The complexity of the issues facing child welfare families reaches beyond the CWS system's ability to handle alone and requires participation by other partners who have responsibility in these areas. Thus, the emphasis of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) herein is on system reform and collaborative action.

For the purposes of this Annual Progress Service Report (APSR), the program improvement goals from the prior year report have been identified as objectives and cover the period from June 30, 2004 to June 30, 2005.

OBJECTIVE 1: The State's objective is to reach the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) target of 8.9 percent in the rate of repeat maltreatment of children (PIP Safety Outcome 1, Item 2A)

California met the improvement goal of 8.9 percent. The current rate is 8.7 percent. The CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this objective and will continue to measure progress.

OBJECTIVE 2: The State's objective is to reach the PIP target of a decrease of two percentage points in the rate of recurrence of abuse or neglect in cases where children are not removed from the home. (PIP Safety Outcome 2, Items 3 & 4)

California has improved in this measure, but has not yet met this goal. However, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006. Safety Outcome 2, Items 3 & 4: Services to Family to Protect Children in Home and Prevent Removal and Risk of Harm to Children, decreased by 0.6 of a percentage point from 23.3 percent to 22.7 percent. Our goal for this outcome is 21 percent. The CDSS continues to analyze this measure to determine the accuracy of the data and factors that may impact the outcome.

OBJECTIVE 3: The State's objective is to reach the PIP target of 0.53 percent in the data indicator for child abuse or neglect in foster care based on the existing data indicator. (PIP Safety Outcome 1, Item 2B)

California has improved in this measure, but has not yet met this goal. However, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006.

California is no longer tracking the data for this item using the same method utilized in the CFSR/PIP. We have learned that there are major reporting anomalies that impact this measure and have taken corrective action to resolve these issues so that we can begin measuring this item correctly.

As a result of these concerns, the CDSS worked in partnership with the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) and the California Health and Human Services Data Center to review existing regulations and statutes to identify what documentation requirements, policies, and processes were provided to counties for reporting incidents of abuse in out-of-home care. We sought to better understand this indicator both by exploring existing practice and reporting processes used by social workers towards verifying consistent processes are used statewide. This has resulted in the State issuing new instructions recording the incidence of abuse in out-of-home care and provide for better data from which to determine what program changes are necessary. The State issued new instructions for recording the incidence of abuse in out-of-home care in All County Information Letter 05-09, which was issued on April 26, 2005.

Benchmarks:

- 1. By June 30, 2005, a minimum of 11 counties will have implemented and begun validation of a consistent approach to the assessment of safety, risk, protective capacity and family strengths.**

This benchmark has been met. Throughout the first half of the year, the 11 pilot counties began implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System. The pilot counties submitted plans for implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System to the CDSS. By June 30, 2005, the 11 pilot counties implemented the System for all new cases.

A workgroup comprised of CDSS and county representatives developed a system framework indicating intervention points throughout the life of a case (from referral to closure) when safety should be assessed and considered. At each point, the purpose and desired outcome of the intervention has been identified. The System has been provided to the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) for development of a training curriculum. CalSWEC worked closely with members of the workgroup to test the curriculum.

A glossary of terms to be used to describe each of the standard areas of review was also developed. The Standardized Safety Assessment System matrix and the companion glossary of terms have been incorporated into the training developed by CalSWEC that social workers will receive.

Two models are being utilized to record the assessment information. Seven of the pilot counties are working with the Children's Research Center to modify the existing Structured Decision Making tools to ensure that all elements are captured. The remaining four pilot counties are working with the Sphere Institute to develop tools that will compliment the "clinically" based model currently being used. While some tools have been developed, other tools are still under development, and some of the tools will not be available to the counties until late 2005. This presents a challenge because not all of the tools will be finalized until after implementation occurs. This requires counties to train staff on where to record the assessment of standard areas not already contained within the context of a tool, and upon the completion of the tools, to retrain staff on the new changes. In the interim, the counties are utilizing workarounds to meet the System requirements.

2. **By June 30, 2005, the CDSS will have established a uniform screening system that utilizes the safety, risk and family protective capacity assessment process, and establishes criteria for each Differential Response path.**

This benchmark has been met. See below.

3. **By June 30, 2005, each of the 11 counties will have developed the community resource capacity to respond to service referrals in targeted communities.**

This benchmark has been met. See below.

4. **By June 30, 2005, a minimum of 11 counties will have begun Implementation and validation of the Differential Response Intake Structure in specific, targeted communities.**

This benchmark has been met. The 11 pilot counties have met their June 30, 2005, target date for implementation of Differential Response in targeted communities and/or identified populations. These counties are utilizing the Statewide Safety Assessment System matrix for screening of safety, risk and family protective capacity.

The Differential Response framework was completed by the CWS Stakeholders Group workgroup. The Differential Response Workgroup, comprised predominantly of county representatives, developed general implementation guidelines to assist the counties in transitioning to implementation of the new system and a Differential Response protocol for three paths of service delivery (CWS High Risk, CWS with Community Partners and Community Partners). Further, the counties developed community partnership capacity to respond to referrals of selected families.

The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) is currently providing training and technical assistance to the 11 pilot counties (and 31 non-pilot counties) on how to implement this new system. They have tested numerous aspects of the Differential Response system as they begin to make refinements. In the current fiscal year, expert “faculty” members of the BSC have been directing their technical assistance to specific issues identified within each county. The BSC and other technical assistance from the State continue to provide the counties with information and support as they implement the Differential Response system in targeted areas.

The Differential Response Workgroup is continuing to examine whether statutory or regulatory change will be necessary in the future, integration within the CWS/CMS, and interim workarounds to document path assignment.

The CDSS, in collaboration with the CWDA, determined that the most cost-effective approach to evaluation of the CWS System Improvements would be to establish a single evaluation process for the entire pilot. Work is continuing in this area.

Other Efforts

- This year, the State Interagency (Children’s) Team (SIT) further defined its role and continued work on a variety of issues. The SIT is chaired by the CDSS and comprised of representatives overseeing programs effecting children from departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) as well as the California Department of Education, Employment Development Department and the Foundation Consortium. The SIT is charged with looking at cross-cutting issues for children including supporting CWS System Improvements. One of these issues is confidentiality, and technical assistance through the National Resource Centers (NRCs) on this issue may be requested.
- The SIT created a separate fiscal advisory group known as the Barrier Busters Interagency Team (BBIT), made up of State and county representatives. The BBIT meets monthly to develop and recommend strategies for improving collaborative funding processes at the State and local levels. Recommendations from the fiscal advisory group are forwarded to the SIT for consideration and approval.
- One of the immediate recommendations adopted was the establishment of fiscal training academies for local governments. The Fiscal Essentials for Children’s Services are trainings designed to improve services to vulnerable children and families via improved funding and fiscal claiming strategies. Those trainings began in March 2005 in Butte County, and have been scheduled throughout the State through May 2006. They will be conducted by the University of California, Davis and subcontracted fiscal experts.

- This year, the CDSS worked with the 10 largest counties (see glossary) to develop specific strategies to be implemented that are based on county performance data and self-assessments in the areas of safety, permanence and well-being. These best practices/strategies are ones that the counties either had implemented or planned to implement by June 30, 2005. All 10 counties were on track to complete their activities by the deadline.
- Assembly Bill 2795, which contained CDSS' legislative proposals to extend the time to develop a case plan from 30 to 60 days and also to extend Family Maintenance services was passed. The Governor signed the bill into law on August 30, 2004, and the provisions of the bill took effect on January 1, 2005. The bill permits additional time to involve the child, family and others important in the child's life to participate in case planning. The CDSS issued All County Letter 05-07, which notified counties about the provisions of the legislation, and informed them that the provision to extend Family Maintenance services was effective January 1, 2005. The provision to extend the time to develop a case plan from 30 to 60 days will require some modifications to the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS), which is the computer system used by all county social workers statewide.
- The CDSS Consolidated Home Study workgroup was convened in July 2003, and included representatives from CWDA, from various counties and the following CDSS Divisions: Legal Affairs, Community Care Licensing and the Children and Family Services. The workgroup met several times to identify issues, barriers and strategies involved in developing a comprehensive family evaluation process. A small group of representatives from the main body developed a more detailed proposal that was presented to the full workgroup on April 13, 2004. Both the CDSS and the CWDA agreed to consider whether there was sufficient merit in the proposal to warrant further development of some of the thornier aspects: costs, staffing qualifications, treatment of existing licensees and due process, etc. After consideration, the CDSS and the CWDA have agreed to move forward on further developing the proposal particularly those areas previously identified above. The joint CDSS/CWDA workgroup convened on May 20, 2005, to discuss proceeding with a legislative proposal for authority to pilot a consolidated home study process.

PIP Outcome: Permanence

Permanence

Permanence for children is one of California's primary goals; specifically permanence in a home in which the child is safe and can grow into a healthy adult. California is committed to ensuring that children have permanence and stability in their living situations, continuity of family relationships, and on-going connections to family, friends and community. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is committed to ensuring that, for children who cannot remain safely in their homes, reunification, adoption, guardianship, alternative permanent placement, or transition from foster care to independent living occurs in a timely manner. Further, the CDSS is committed to ensuring that children's primary connections to extended family, friends, community and racial heritage are preserved.

Objective 1: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) target of decreasing the rate of children re-entering foster care within 12 months of reunification to 9.4 percent. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 5)

California has shown slight improvement in this measure, but has not yet met this goal. However, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006. The percentage improved from 10.5 to 10.4 percent, and we look to continued progress in meeting our goal. Our goal for this outcome is 9.4 percent. The CDSS continues to analyze this measure to determine the impact of other factors, such as increased statewide reunification.

Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase the percentage of children who have two or fewer foster care placements in the first year of their latest removal by 3.8 percentage points. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 6)

California met the improvement goal of 81.6 percent. The current rate is 85.4 percent. The CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this area and will continue to measure progress.

Objective 3: The State's objective is to reach the PIP target to improve the timely establishment of appropriate permanency goals from 70.4 percent (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 7)

California data indicates that we have met this goal for Permanency Outcome 1, Item 7. An analysis by CDSS staff determined that the original methodology for calculating this goal was in error and renegotiated the methodology for this data with Region IX. As renegotiated, our goal for Permanency Outcome 1, Item 7 is 70.4 percent, an increase from the revised baseline of 67.4 percent. Based on the corrected data, California met the goal for the period ending September 2003. According to the data from the fourth

quarter of 2004, the percentage has continued to increase to 72.3 percent demonstrating that California has exceeded the goal.

Objectives 4 and 5 will be reported on in the June 30, 2009 APSR.

Objective 6: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to reduce the proportion of children with a goal of long-term foster care at two years after entry to 31.3 percent. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 10)

California data indicates that we have met the goal for Permanency Outcome 1, Item 10. An analysis by CDSS staff determined that the original methodology for calculating this goal was in error and renegotiated the methodology for this data with Region IX. As renegotiated, the goal for Permanency Outcome 1, Item 10 is 31.3 percent, a decrease from the revised baseline of 34.3 percent. According to the data from the third quarter of 2004, the percentage decreased to 31.3, percent demonstrating that California has met the goal.

Objective 7: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase from the baseline survey by three percentage points, the percentage of children whose primary connections are preserved. (PIP Permanency Outcome 2, Item 14)

California has shown improvement in this measure, but has not yet achieved the goal. However, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006. The second statewide survey, which was completed at the end of December 2004, indicated an increase of 1.2 percentage points from 89.3 percent to 90.5 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 92.3 percent.

The CDSS used a statewide statistically valid survey that established a baseline performance level for Permanency Outcome 1, Item 14. Progress is assessed using a second and third survey to compare to the baseline performance.

Objective 8: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that Family to Family (see glossary) will be available in those counties whose caseload combined represents 60 percent of the CWS caseload statewide. (PIP Systemic Factor 2, Item 25)

California met the improvement goal for this systemic factor. The goal for this item is that counties with a combined caseload equivalent to 60 percent of the statewide total will have implemented Family to Family in targeted communities. Currently, counties with a combined statewide caseload of 86 percent of the statewide total are at various phases of implementation in accordance with the Family to Family implementation schedule.

Objective 9: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to decrease the proportion of children in care for 17 of the most recent 22 months without a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), by two percent. (PIP Systemic Factor 2, Item 28)

California met the improvement goal in this systemic factor. Systemic Factor 2, Item 28 measures the number of TPR proceedings in compliance with the federal standard of within 17 of the last 22 months. Our goal for this outcome is 87.5 percent. The State improved by decreasing the proportion of children in care without a termination of parental rights from the baseline of 89.5 percent to 86.7 percent, as per data from the fourth quarter of 2004. This exceeded our goal of 2.0 percentage points by .8 percentage points. The CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this area and will continue to measure progress.

Benchmarks

- 1. By June 30, 2005, the CDSS will have developed and implemented quality case planning and service delivery protocols that include team-based approaches to promote family engagement, such as team decision-making, family conferencing, etc., for targeted cases in each of the 11 pilot counties.**

This benchmark has been met. See below.

- 2. By June 30, 2005, the CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning.**

This benchmark has been met. Quality case planning and service delivery protocols were developed and implemented for a target population in each of the 11 pilot counties by June 30, 2005. Protocols were developed for three focus areas. These focus areas are defined as:

- **Team Decision-Making**
A meeting of key stakeholders in the child's case that include the biological family, extended family members and/or significant community support persons, foster parents (if the child is in placement), the caseworker, caseworker's supervisor and service providers. The Team Decision-Making meeting is specifically used for placement decisions, change in placement or reunification. Team Decision-Making meetings are always facilitated by a trained facilitator.
- **Family Participation in Case Planning**
The team decision-making model recognizes the birth family as the expert on its own children and builds an alliance with the primary family members. The family is encouraged to invite extended relatives or significant support persons from the community and is encouraged to give their perspective on the current situation. The caseworker recommends a plan of action. The

family and the rest of the team are invited to respond to the plan and to make suggestions and revisions to achieve permanence for children. Through the “New Initiatives” training, the CDSS provided training to child welfare and probation supervisors on good case planning practice, including techniques to involve all family members in the case planning process. During the past year, “New Initiatives” training was provided to over 89 percent of child welfare and probation supervisors Statewide.

- Youth Inclusion in Case Planning

Youth are encouraged to participate in the development of their case plan for permanency or transition into the community through the Team Decision-Making meetings based on their developmental maturity. Youth may request the attendance of a specific adult or significant support person to assist them in the Team Decision-Making meeting. Through the “New Initiatives” training, the CDSS provided training to child welfare and probation supervisors on good case planning practice, including techniques to involve all family members in the case planning process.

Other Efforts

- The Family to Family initiative is in various phases of implementation throughout California. Partners under the California Initiative include the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the CDSS. Families are supported by this initiative by improving safety of the placement and by having families, including the child, participate in the team decision-making process. As of March 2005, there are 11 counties holding Team Decision-Making meetings – Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Monterey, Orange, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus. The remaining thirteen counties are in the process of planning, training staff, and working with their community partners to prepare for Team Decision-Making roll out.
- As of December 2004, approximately 88 percent of the 85,286 children in child welfare supervised foster care in California live in a Family to Family county (December 2004). Currently, 24 out of the 58 counties participate in the Family to Family Initiative. The California Family to Family counties are divided into four cluster groups based on the implementation status of their initiative. Los Angeles County is divided into three cluster groups based on their Service Planning Areas (SPAs). The foundations and the CDSS provide technical assistance to counties with their Family to Family implementation through expert consultants. The four strategies of the Family to Family Model are: Recruiting, Training and Supporting Resource Families; Building Community Partnerships; Team Decision-Making; and Self Evaluation.
- California has made a significant commitment to improve in the area of preserving family connections through a focus on social worker and probation officer training.

Through the “New Initiatives” training, the CDSS provided training to child welfare and probation supervisors on good case planning practice, including techniques to involve all family members in the case planning process. During the past year, “New Initiatives” training was provided to over 89 percent of child welfare and probation supervisors Statewide.

- Effective July 1, 2004, the CDSS entered into a two year interagency agreement with the Judicial Council of California to create the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Full Compliance Project. The project was created because Indian children continue to be removed from their families and tribal communities and placed with non-Indian caregivers. While juvenile court judges and placing agency staff have received some training on ICWA, this project presents an opportunity to provide targeted training and technical assistance in order to increase knowledge of ICWA. The ICWA Full Compliance Project is designed to improve compliance with ICWA by making available a range of facilitation and training services through cross-disciplinary regional trainings of judicial officers, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers. Services will be tailored to the needs of the local county or region, and protocols will be developed to assure a more complete understanding of the requirements of ICWA. These protocols may include checklists for agencies to follow the law covering identification of an Indian child, services to Indian children and families, notice procedures, description and expectation of active efforts, and placement preferences for Indian children. Educational workshops will be provided by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. This project will impact not only the preservation of connections for Indian children, but also achieving permanency, as defined by the Indian community.

Recruitment of qualified individuals to fill positions in the ICWA Full Compliance Project was challenging. A focused recruitment was completed because of the need for individuals that have a background/experience in working with Indian children and families and the child welfare system. The contractor recently hired the attorney and the court services analyst that will be working on the project.

Two regional symposiums on ICWA have been conducted – one in Orange County on June 2, 2005, and one in San Francisco on July 6, 2005. These symposiums focused on the nuts and bolts of applying ICWA in dependency and delinquency cases. There were more than 130 attendees at the Orange County symposium and over 150 attendees at the San Francisco symposium. The symposium attendees included numerous county counsel, court officers, child welfare and probation staff as well as tribal representatives. The evaluations received for both symposiums were very positive.

- Technical assistance for judges continued under the provisions of the Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA) contract. The contract has been amended and an additional JRTA staff attorney hired to enable the JRTA team to provide additional technical assistance regarding concurrent planning,

reassessment of permanency and termination of parental rights. The JRTA team prioritized this focus on the ten largest counties. Reviews have been completed in Orange, San Francisco, Sacramento, Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Clara and Kern counties. The other 48 counties will be reviewed and provided technical assistance in future years. Additionally, the JRTA team sponsored a video broadcast as a technical assistance tool to help maximize the dissemination of information on permanency. The video broadcast on permanency was held on February 23, 2005, and aired for all judicial officers.

- As part of the California Child and Family Services Review, the CDSS reviewed the county self-assessments and system improvement plans (SIPs) submitted by the 10 largest counties regarding their implementation of concurrent planning. The CDSS offered assistance to these counties in the implementation of improvement plans. The assistance offered included: the Concurrent Planning Implementation Guide; technical assistance from the National Resource Centers; All County Information Letter I-23-04, dated May 13, 2004, regarding Promising Practices; and training available through the Regional Training Academies. The CDSS will continue to monitor counties' progress on their system improvement plans related to concurrent planning, as well as in other areas. Counties who undergo a PQCR may identify issues, such as concurrent planning, in which they would desire technical assistance. We anticipate in the coming year that some counties will request technical assistance from the National Resource Centers through CDSS.
- Some of the concurrent planning strategies identified by counties in the SIPs include: training staff on Team Decision-Making; engaging in initiatives to foster culture change emphasizing the urgency of reunification and integrating concurrent planning into the overall approach; increasing substance abuse resources; creating court recommended templates for continuity/accuracy of appropriate legal findings and orders; revising current guidelines to incorporate Family to Family activities and train CWS staff; reviewing concurrent planning policy and modifying areas to improve outcomes for children; expanding community and family involvement in the concurrent planning process.
- Los Angeles County has made substantial efforts to provide training to staff in the area of concurrent planning. Training was provided to managers, supervisors, and line staff in four different phases and includes permanency planning/adoption assessment training and skill building for all social work staff. Training specifically for managers and supervisors began in spring 2004 and concluded in December 2004. The final phase involves a countywide effort to build concurrent planning skills for all social workers and supervisors.
- Additional permanency efforts are underway in Los Angeles County. The Permanency Partnership Program (P3), which began during State fiscal year 2004-05, is a partnership with the Consortium for Children (under a contract that the Consortium has with the CDSS for Adoption Mediation), and has been doing

well. This program provides a "Permanency Partner" (trained adoption mediator) to a foster youth with the goal of establishing one or more adult connections-often times someone the youth knows or knew in the past-with the goal of reunifying the youth with his family or moving the child out of long term foster care and into adoption or legal guardianship. If there is no existing connection that can be identified, a search for a family to adopt is initiated. As a last resort, if legal permanency cannot be established, they are ensuring the youth is connected to an adult mentor who will commit to working with the youth through early adulthood.

PIP Outcome: Well-Being

Promote the Well-Being of Children and Families

California is committed to the well-being of children and families. To measure progress towards well-being, the following specific outcomes have been established:

- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) used a statewide statistically valid survey that established a baseline performance level for the Well-Being measures. Two subsequent surveys are being used to measure change from the baseline performance.

Objective 1: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percentage of children, parents and caregivers whose needs were assessed and who received services to meet those needs. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 17)

For this objective, there are two measures that need to be met before it is considered achieved: 1) the percentage of children, parents and caregivers whose needs were assessed; and 2) the percentage of children, parents and caregivers who received services to meet those needs. California met the first of the two measures and improved in the second. The mid-PIP survey indicated we obtained our improvement goal for the first measure (the number of persons receiving assessment divided by the number of persons identified as case/family members). The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 4.3 percentage points, from 55.7 percent at the baseline to 60 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 58.7 percent.

In the second measure, (the number of persons receiving services divided by the number of persons assessed), we have seen improvement. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 1.2 percentage points, from 66.4 percent at the baseline to 67.6 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 69.4 percent.

California has not yet achieved the goal for this measure because both measures need to be met before it is considered achieved and the survey process has not yet been completed; however, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006.

Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of children, parents and caregivers involved in case planning. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 18)

California has improved in all three measures for this item and is performing above the 90 percent compliance rate in two of the three measures. For this objective, all three

measures need to be met before it is considered achieved. The mid-PIP survey indicated improved performance in the improvement goals for the two measures for Item 18, the percentage of children, parents and caregivers involved in case planning. In the first measure, the percentage of cases in which the case plan was discussed at all, the improvement goal is 93.9 percent. The latest survey for this measure indicated an increase of 2.5 percentage points, from 90.9 percent at the baseline to 93.4 percent.

In the second measure there has also been improvement. This measure, which is a two part measure, is the percentage the case plan is discussed with (a) interviewee and (b) interviewee and case child. The latest survey for part (a) of this second measure indicated an increase of 2.3 percentage points, from 89.6 percent at the baseline to 91.9 percent. The improvement goal for item 18, measure 2(a) is 92.6 percent.

The latest survey for measure 2(b) indicated an increase of 0.3 of a percentage point, from 50.7 percent at the baseline to 51.0 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 53.7 percent.

California has not yet achieved the goal for this measure because all three measures need to be met before it is considered achieved and the survey process has not yet been completed; however, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006.

Objective 3: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points the percentage of compliance by workers with planned parent visit schedules; the percentage of parents whose ability to meet their case plan goals was promoted/assisted by social worker visits; and the percentage of parents whose ability to safely parent the in-home child was promoted/assisted by social worker visits. [PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 20]

The second statewide survey indicated we obtained our improvement goal for measures two and three for Item 20, which measures worker visits with parents. The survey also indicated improved performance in the first measure for this item, although we have not yet quite met the improvement goal. The first measure is the compliance of workers with planned parent visit schedules. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 1.4 percentage points, from 85.2 percent at the baseline to 86.6 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 88.2 percent.

In the second measure for this item, the goal has been met by the percentage of parents in whose ability to safely parent children in the home was promoted/assisted by social worker visits. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 6.5 percentage points, from 70.8 percent at the baseline to 77.3 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 73.8 percent.

In the third measure for this item, the goal has been met in the percentage of parents in whose ability to meet their case plan goals was promoted/assisted by social worker

visits. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 3.2 percentage points, from 66.6 percent at the baseline to 69.8 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 69.6 percent.

California has not yet achieved the goal for this measure because all three measures need to be met before it is considered achieved and the survey process has not yet been completed; however, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006.

Objective 4: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of all children in the home, or in out-of-home placement, who were assessed and received services for educational needs. [PIP Well-Being Outcome 2, Item 21]

The second statewide survey indicated improved performance in one of the two measures for Item 21, the percentage of children receiving in-home services or who are in out-of-home care who were assessed and received services for educational needs. The first measure is the percentage of cases in which the educational needs of the children were assessed. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 2.1 percentage points, from 61 percent at the baseline to 63.1 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 64 percent.

In the second measure, which is the percentage of children with educational needs who received services, the second survey for this measure indicated a decrease of 1.9 percentage points, from 71.4 percent at the baseline to 69.5 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 74.4 percent. The CDSS is working with the California Department of Education to improve the provision of services to children. Please see the section on "other efforts" below for more detail.

California has not yet achieved the goal for this measure because both measures need to be met before it is considered achieved and the survey process has not yet been completed; however, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006.

Objective 5: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of all children in the home, or in out-of-home placement, who were assessed and received services for mental health needs. [Well-Being Outcome 3, Item 23]

The second statewide survey indicated improved performance in one of the two improvement goals for Item 23, the percentage of children receiving in-home services or who are in out-of-home care who were assessed and received services for mental health needs. The first measure is the percentage of cases in which mental health needs were assessed. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 1.1

percentage points, from 43.7 percent at the baseline to 44.8 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 46.7 percent.

The second measure, which is the percentage of children with mental health needs who received services, also indicates improvement. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 1.3 percentage points, from 55.2 percent at the baseline to 56.5 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 58.2 percent.

California has not yet achieved the goal for this measure because both measures need to be met before it is considered achieved and the survey process has not yet been completed; however, as per federal instructions, the State will have up to 12 non-overlapping months to show that actions implemented during the PIP are impacting the data. Therefore, the new date to determine goal achievement is September 2006.

Benchmarks

- 1. By June 30, 2005, CDSS will have developed and implemented quality case planning and service delivery protocols in each of the 11 pilot counties for targeted cases in each county.**
- 2. By June 30, 2005, CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to enhance family participation in case planning.**
- 3. By June 30, 2005, CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning.**

These benchmarks have been met. Please refer to the Permanency section for information on the benchmarks.

Other Efforts

- To improve information contained in the case files, the CDSS issued All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-80-04 on December 28, 2004 and All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-83-04 on December 30, 2004. While it is recognized that in many cases services and supports are being provided to meet the educational and mental health needs of children receiving in-home services as well as to children placed in out-of home care, documentation of this was not being made consistently for children receiving services in-home. By documenting the information, it assists workers in identifying which services have been requested, utilized and successful; records service type and duration; and demonstrate to the court that reasonable services have been provided to children. To improve the information documented in the case files, the CDSS issued these notices encouraging counties to ensure that when mental needs or

educational needs are assessed and services provided, the information will be documented in the case file.

- The CDSS is working with the CDE and the State Interagency Team to address the educational needs of children in out-of home care. Recent legislation requires the Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to designate a staff person as a foster care education liaison to ensure the proper placement, transfer and enrollment in school for foster youth among other provisions. In addition, this spring, the CDSS and the CDE issued a joint letter to the counties and to the educational community to promote the development and implementation of strategies/policies/protocols to improve educational services for children in the child welfare system. The letter contained a list of resources, and is ACIN number I-10-05.
- The Northern California Regional Training Academy, under their contract with the CDSS, has developed an Educational Advocacy Curriculum for social workers and probation officers. The curriculum provides practical knowledge and tools for educational advocacy. Topics include the educational rights of children in California, an overview of special education, how to be a strong educational advocate for children in the child welfare system, and disciplinary issues in regular and special education settings. The curriculum has been tested by the Northern California Regional Training Academy, and is now available on compact disc.
- Los Angeles County has devoted substantial resources to the area of the mental health needs of children. The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) continues to collaborate with the County's Department of Mental Health (DMH) to improve mental health services to children in foster care. The DCFS Medical Director and other senior managers from DCFS and DMH meet to address many cross-system issues. Together, they have developed protocols to better improve access to services and are currently implementing as part of their existing Multi-disciplinary Assessment Teams (MAT). The level of cooperation between DCFS and DMH to address the mental health needs of children in foster care has been enhanced over the last year, and is based on a high level of commitment by both agencies to improve services to children, particularly those placed in out-of-home care.
- CDSS staff continued to participate in the various stakeholder groups by attending public meetings and conference calls on children and youth topics related to Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Staff members attended meetings on March 1, 2005, March 23, 2005 and April 26, 2005. In addition, CDSS issued All County Information Notice 07-05 in April 2005, encouraging local participation in county welfare departments as well as emphasizing that counties consider the relationship and impact of the MHSA on child welfare state and federal outcomes as part of the planning process.

At the State Interagency Team meetings, the CDSS continues to actively partner with California Department of Mental Health (CDMH) in planning implementation related to the specified CDSS components of the MHSA provisions. The CDSS has not received any funding from CDMH yet. Funds for the CDSS components for administration and technical assistance are available for the 2005/2006 fiscal year; however, counties received their first phase of funding for local planning during the 2004-05 fiscal year. The planning primarily continues to be with the local county mental health departments.

CDSS will continue to dialogue with CDMH, providing input on relevant aspects of the draft three year plan requirements and to collaborate in any review process. This will help us to develop a technical assistance plan to support the local implementation process.

PIP Outcome: Systemic Factors

Systemic Factors

Progress made through the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) in the federal Systemic Factors is as follows:

Objective 1: California will develop and fully implement its new outcomes based quality assurance system, the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) in January 2004 and complete a review of at least 15 counties by June 2005. (PIP Systemic Factor 3, Item 31)

The CDSS met this objective. Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCR) for child welfare agencies were completed in 15 counties: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, San Luis Obispo, San Diego, Imperial, Kings, Sacramento, El Dorado, Lassen, Kern, Santa Clara, Nevada, Inyo and Tulare. Concurrently, PQCRs were completed for county probation agencies in Los Angeles, San Diego, Imperial, Kings, Sacramento, El Dorado, Lassen, Nevada, Inyo and Tulare.

Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that a core curriculum is developed and delivered by all training entities statewide. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 32)

The CDSS met this objective. A common core curriculum was developed utilizing information obtained regarding current training practices, training needs and input from stakeholders to address the goals and objectives of the Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP). The curriculum will be used to train all child welfare workers. Throughout the process of surveying the counties and developing the curriculum, best practices were shared by members of the Statewide Training Education Committee (STEC) and the Curriculum Development Oversight Group (CDOG). This has helped to promote statewide consistency and foster good working relationships.

Additionally, test items and a validation and administrative process were developed to determine whether the curriculum training is effective. The intent is to test volunteers who attend the new core curriculum training between July--December 2005 and to analyze the data. The results will help to assess the effectiveness of the training and to ascertain if changes are needed in the curriculum.

Objective 3: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that statewide minimum requirements for the ongoing training of existing staff will be established and implemented. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 33)

The CDSS met this objective. The Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC) was established to provide recommendations related to the PIP training goals and other statewide training issues. These recommendations provide the basis for the proposed regulations that will implement:

- A standardized core curriculum for new workers;

- A standardized core curriculum for new supervisors; and
- A requirement for ongoing training.

The proposed regulations were submitted to the Office of Regulation Development in June 2005. An All County Information Notice (I-85-04) was disseminated alerting counties to the proposed regulations.

Objective 4: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that a standard core curriculum will be developed and used to train caregivers in all counties. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 34)

The CDSS met this objective. The objective was modified during re-negotiations with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Region IX, to reflect that learning outcomes/objectives were developed instead of developing a new curriculum. The outcomes/objectives were field tested, and it was found that the two major curricula used by the majority of counties in the State already covered virtually all of the 41 learning objectives. For the few not covered, supplemental materials are available for use.

The learning outcomes/objectives will give resource families statewide the same basic information they need to function as caregivers of dependent children. These learning outcomes/objectives were released in All County Letter 05-06, which advised all counties of implementation.

Objective 5: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that where service gaps are identified by counties in the C-CFSR process, 20 percent of the counties will have addressed at least one identified service gap. (PIP Systemic Factor 5, Item 36)

The CDSS met this objective. Of the 43 counties that identified service needs through the Self Assessment and Self Improvement Plan (SIP) process, 30 counties (70 percent) identified at least one service need. Of the 30 counties that identified a service need(s), about 80 percent (24 counties) have addressed at least one identified service gap by June 30, 2005.

In reviewing 41 of the county SIPS for identified service gaps and needs, the most commonly identified need by counties was for additional placement options for children placed in care or transitioning out of foster care (68 percent), followed by educational services (39 percent), mental health resources (36 percent) and substance abuse (34 percent). Counties specifically identified the need for more placement options for children with special needs, emancipating youth, foster adopt homes and foster family homes.

Counties also identified a need for more mental health assessments and for treatment services for families not eligible for Medi-Cal. Some counties expressed the need for more pediatric resources for children with serious emotional, physical or

developmental issues. Also noted were the need for services for children with reactive attachment disorder and for providers that treat infants and toddlers.

Counties identified a need for more collaboration between schools and child welfare services; and increased educational services for emancipating youth. Counties identified the need for more supportive and preventive substance abuse services for adults and children. Some counties expressed the need for more substance abuse detox, assessment, treatment services and options for youth.

Objective 6: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that of counties where improvement is needed, as identified in the C-CFSR process for 1) service array for youth and Native American and African American children, and 2) case plans are generic and lack an individualized approach, 20 percent of the counties will have addressed at least one identified service gap. (PIP Systemic Factor 5, Item 37)

The CDSS met this objective. Of the 43 counties that identified service needs through the Self Assessment and Self Improvement Plan (SIP) process, 30 counties (70 percent) identified at least one service need. Of the 30 counties that identified at least one service need, about 80 percent (24 counties) addressed at least one identified service gap by June 30, 2005. Please refer to Objective 8 below for details on what California has accomplished to address fairness and equity (see glossary).

In reviewing the SIPs for the 10 largest counties, some counties identified service needs specifically for youth, Native American and/or African American children. These included the need to enhance aftercare services for youth transitioning into adulthood, and the need for culturally appropriate, community based services. For example, San Francisco County has adopted several measures, including a youth initiative to ensure that all youth have a plan that guarantees housing, employment, education, training and healthcare. San Francisco Department of Human Services Family and Children Services (SFDHS FCS) has partnered with Larkin Street Youth Services to begin implementing AB 427, which created the Transitional Housing Placement Program for Emancipated Foster/Probation Youth and has partnered with other local organizations to increase scholarship funds and to create Individual Development Accounts for former foster youth. SFDHS FCS has also reorganized and expanded its Independent Living Program to coordinate with One-Stop Employment Centers, to expand its services to youth as young as 14, and to create an after-care advisor position. SFDHS FCS has also joined the Honoring Emancipated Youth collaborative. San Francisco has also recently been chosen as one of four pilot sites for the Youth Transitions Initiative, a new strategy of Family to Family. In another example, Kern County is exploring funding for parenting classes in the outlying areas that are culturally, linguistically and cognitively appropriate.

Objective 7: By June 30, 2005, the State will ensure that all State/county licensing and approving staff are trained on and apply the same

licensing/approval standards to all foster family homes. (PIP Systemic Factor 7, Item 42)

The CDSS met this objective. A relative approval monitoring system was fully implemented to ensure relative placements meet all current approval standards. CDSS has reviewed and issued final reports for all 58 counties. As of May 2005, 42 counties have submitted and received approval on their corrective action plans. Ten counties were not required to submit corrective action plans as their performance was above the established compliance threshold. The CDSS continues to assist remaining counties with the development of appropriate corrective action plans.

The CDSS incorporated the licensing/approval standards into the Training Academies curriculum. The CDSS' Community Care Licensing Division incorporated the licensing/approval standards into their training curriculum and started statewide training sessions for State and county staff.

Objective 8: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that each county will implement a State-approved recruitment plan that reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of children in care. (PIP Systemic Factor 7, Item 44)

The CDSS has met this objective. Counties included their recruitment plans in their SIPs, which were approved by the State. To learn more about specific strategies being employed, a conference call was held with the 10 largest counties in California to discuss their recruitment plans. Recruitment strategies included:

- Implementing Family to Family
- Forming connections with community partners to boost recruitment in targeted areas. These community partners include faith-based organizations, school districts, community based organizations, businesses and youth sports leagues.
- Utilizing current foster parents to mentor prospective and new foster parents.
- Involving emancipated youth in recruitment by having them speak at foster parent orientations and training classes.
- Developing and implementing public awareness campaigns on radio and television which highlight the advantages of being a foster parent.

The CDSS also sought expert guidance in the area of disproportionality. In 2004, the CDSS met with the National Resource Center (NRC) on Permanency and Special Needs Adoptions. The meeting involved Dr. Ruth McRoy, Associate Dean for Research, Center for Social Work Research, University of Texas at Austin and consultant for the NRC for Foster Care and Permanency Planning. Melody Roe of Adopt US Kids also participated. Dr. McRoy reviewed information on practice, policy and systemic gaps. The focus of her review was to assess where the State can address the issue of disproportional and improve the foster/adoptive recruitment of families in order to meet the ethnic and racial makeup of children in care. She provided her report and recommendations to the CDSS in August 2004. The CDSS shared the report with Los Angeles County and other counties. The CDSS has discussed the use

of the National Resource Center resources with all counties, and will probably further utilize one of the NRCs on this issue in the coming year.

The CDSS co-sponsored a Leadership Symposium on Fairness and Equity in California's Child Welfare System in November 2004. Representatives from most counties were in attendance for the discussion on cultural competency assessment, internal and external capacity building to address fairness, equity and disproportionality, recruiting families for Indian children and the San Francisco Disproportionality Project. A 33 member task force was established to develop comprehensive recommendations that would reduce the existing disproportionality in San Francisco's child welfare system. Los Angeles has also contracted with the University of California at Los Angeles on a similar project.

On December 14, 2004, the CDSS met with the Bay Area Regional Counties of CWDA and discussed recruitment strategies, and the cultural diversity of resource family homes to reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of children in out-of-home care.

Training and Staff Development Plan

TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

California's state-supervised, county-administered CWS system presents unique challenges and opportunities for developing and delivering training to various professional and paraprofessional child welfare staff and providers throughout the State.

The 58 county child welfare system (CWS) programs vary in many ways: from rural to highly urbanized; from a workforce of a few public child welfare workers to a staff of thousands; from no formal staff development organization to very sophisticated staff development departments. Meeting the evolving and diversified training needs for these programs requires a continuing innovative and multifaceted approach.

Welfare and Institutions Code (W&IC) section 16200 et. seq., (Chapter 1310, Statutes of 1987) requires the California Department of Social Service (CDSS) to provide practice-relevant training for social workers, agencies under contract with county welfare departments, mandated child abuse reporters and all members of the child welfare delivery system. W&IC §16206 states the purpose of the program is to develop and implement statewide coordinated training programs designed specifically to meet the needs of county child protective service social workers assigned emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification, permanent placement, and adoption responsibilities.

In Title IV-E funding for State Fiscal Year 2004-2005, the training program articulated in W&IC §16206 accounts for approximately 15 percent of all Title IV-E Training funds claimed by the State. The balance of the Title IV-E Training funds have been used to support workforce preparation in the following areas: approximately 7 percent for foster parent training, 28 percent for the MSW/BSW stipend program and 49 percent to support county staff development programs and county initiated training. There has been an increase in funding which is attributable to increases in foster parent training and in the stipend MSW/BSW stipend program.

Consistent with the CDSS' federally approved cost allocation plan, training expenses are directly charged to the benefiting program. For costs allocated to Title IV-E, the nonfederal discount rate will be applied to account for the non-federal caseload. Additionally, trainings are budgeted by the day rather than by the person. Thus, in some instances, training days include trainees other than those identified in 45 CFR 1356.6(c) (1) and (2), but who have a direct interest in the foster care program at no additional cost to the State or to Title IV-E.

THE TITLE IV-B PLAN TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT GOAL

GOAL 4: Prepare and support the workforce to help children and families reach positive outcomes

Objective 1: Develop and implement a core curriculum for all new child welfare workers and supervisors.

Objective 2: Establish minimum training requirements for ongoing training of existing staff.

Objective 3: Develop and implement a standard core curriculum for caregivers.

Specific accomplishments/progress:

Objective 1: This objective has been met. The CDSS, in partnership with CalSWEC, convened the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC). The Committee recommended that a statewide standardized common core curriculum be used to provide training for all new child welfare workers and supervisors. The "Core of the Core", was developed by a sub-group of the Committee and covers the following six areas: The Framework of Child Welfare Practice, Child Maltreatment Identification, Human Development, Assessment of Safety, Risk and Protective Capacity, and Engaging Families in Case Planning & Case Management, and Placement and Permanency.

The lead organizations in the development of the "Core of the Core" curriculum were:

- Contra Costa County--Framework of Child Welfare Practice.
- Public Child Welfare Training Academy (Southern Region) --Child Maltreatment Identification
- Northern California Training Academy--Human Development.
- CalSWEC--Assessment of Safety, Risk and Protective Capacity.
- Central California Public Social Services Training Academy and Inter University Consortium/Los Angeles County--Engaging Families in Case Planning and Case Management.
- Bay Area Academy--Placement and Permanency.

The Regional Training Academies and the counties will be using this curriculum for new child welfare workers hired after July 2005.

Additionally, California benefited from the expertise of the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement's review of the curriculum for new child welfare supervisors that were developed by the sub-committee of STEC. This curriculum has also been piloted and is being used, commencing July 2005, for new child welfare supervisors.

Objective 2: The CDSS reviewed two key reports prepared by CalSWEC - the November 15, 2004, final report of California's Baseline Assessment of Child Welfare Training; and the Executive Summary and Recommendations for Ongoing Training

Requirements, dated November 9, 2004. The information contained in these reports assisted in the CDSS promulgating regulations regarding training. A Notice of Anticipated Regulatory Action was written and has been submitted to the Office of Regulation Development.

As currently drafted, these regulations will require that every child welfare worker and supervisor undergo 20 hours of training per year and each county must report to the CDSS how many of its employees received new and ongoing training.

Objective 2 has been met as the training requirements for ongoing staff have been developed, and the draft regulations are in the regulatory process.

Objective 3: This objective has been met. Training of Resource Families (foster parents and relative caregivers) is provided primarily through an interagency agreement between the CDSS and the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges (COCCC). The local community colleges statewide conduct training programs using nationally recognized curricula (PRIDE, MAP). However, a workgroup was charged with assessing caregiver training needs and recommended 41 learning outcomes/objectives. These were field tested and it was found that virtually all the learning outcomes/objectives are included in the curricula being used by the counties. For those learning outcomes/objectives not included in the existing curricula, supplemental materials are being used. On June 15, 2005, an All County Letter was issued by CDSS advising counties of the implementation of the standardized learning objectives, and of supplemental materials available for use.

The learning outcomes/objectives include information to help foster/adoptive parents define independent living skills for foster youth; recognize the importance of beginning the development of independent living skills at an early age; and explore the resources available to support the adolescent's transition from the resource family to life on their own.

Sixty-five college programs delivered 26,000 hours of training to more than 22,000 participants. The total amount of IV-E funding is \$6,112,000 and will remain the same for years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007.

Additional information is available at: Foster Parent and Relative Caregiver Education Program http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/ss/fostercare/foster_child.htm

TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Regional Training Academies (RTAs)

The five academies, listed below, are committed to offering a continuum of training services that will: eliminate the duplication of, and offer consistency in, the delivery of training; assure linkages between the classroom and the field; support staff retention; promote the professionalism of current and potential staff in public social services and

child welfare agencies within California; and promote promising practices in the field of child welfare.

RTA Highlights over the past year:

Central California Public Social Services Training Academy (Central)

<http://www.centralacademy.org/>

Located at California State University, Fresno, the Central California Public Social Services Training Academy (CCPSSTA) works collaboratively with 11 counties in the central region: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura.

CCPSSTA has:

- Expanded Peer Mentoring from Merced, Tulare, Fresno and Santa Barbara counties to include San Luis Obispo County.
- Worked with the STEC to integrate the Peer Mentor Model with the common core implementation.
- Presented the Peer Mentor Model at the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF) Children's Bureau 15th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect.
- Delivered CWS/CMS training via computer assisted distance learning methods.
- Assisted four California counties with the piloting of Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) training and implementation materials.

The Academy co-sponsored the 15th Annual Latino Social Network Conference in November 2004 with over 500 in attendance. The conference offered workshops in a wide range of subjects with an emphasis on fairness and equity. The conference also offered social workers an opportunity to collaborate and network with one another.

Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA)

<http://pcwta.sdsu.edu/courses.html>

Based at California State University, San Diego, the Academy provides a comprehensive, competency based in-service training program for the public child welfare staff of five Southern California counties: Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego.

PCWTA has:

- Piloted the PQCR in San Bernardino and Riverside.
- Prepared PQCR planning and training materials for the CDSS, counties and the other Academies.
- Completed PQCRs in San Diego and Imperial Counties during April 2005.
- Piloted child maltreatment identification curriculum in April 2005.
- Prepared for increased child welfare worker hiring by the counties.
- Worked on a fairness & equity project focused on placement of children of color in Southern California communities (excluding Los Angeles).

- Developed staff liaisons to each county to regularly meet with managers to address training needs and allow the Academy to be more responsive to each county.

Northern California Training Academy (NCTA)

<http://humanservices.ucdavis.edu/Academy/>

The Northern California Training Academy (NCTA), located at the University of California at Davis, provides training tailored to the varied needs of 33 counties in Northern California: Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba.

NCTA has:

- Developed “Strength-Based Practice in Child Welfare” training for social workers and supervisors. Training was delivered to 647 participants from 19 counties.
- Provided a series of training on issues of fairness and equity for social workers and supervisors. Training was delivered to 48 participants from 9 counties.
- Prepared core training and individual training evaluations. This involved 34 individuals from 12 counties.
- Provided training in the Multiethnic Placement Act, covering how to meet the requirements of and complying with the Act, how it impacts daily practice, and development of diligent recruitment plans. Training was delivered to 83 participants from 12 counties.
- Developed an educational advocacy manual and training curriculum to support the education of children in foster care. Training was delivered to 177 participants from 25 counties. This curriculum is being made available Statewide.

The NCTA coordinated a symposium, “Research to Practice: Supporting Our Sons and Daughters into Adulthood”, to benefit those working with families and children in crisis to help provide safe paths in their transition to adulthood. The trainers’ shared front-line stories to emphasize the warning signs leading up to violence, peer pressure, relationships and substance abuse as well as solutions for turning kids around. There were over 800 participants.

In May 2005, the NCTA held a symposium titled “The Nature of Nurture: Biology, Environment, and the Drug-Exposed Child” in Redding and at UC Davis. The symposium examined the biological changes in brain function and structure caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol and other drugs. It also examined the social and environmental factors that exacerbate and ameliorate the effects of these changes, and community-based strategies that can support the successful outcomes of children at risk from prenatal exposure. There were 336 attendees from 20 counties.

Bay Area Training Academy (BAA)

<http://www.sfsu.edu/~bayacad/>

The BAA, at California State University, San Francisco, serves 12 counties that are very diverse in size, challenges and internal resources. The BAA provides professional development services for the following 12 counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma.

The BAA has:

- Worked with the California Youth Connection to develop a curriculum and a training program that improves social worker skills in supporting emancipation-age foster youth.*
- Developed useful tools and guidelines for promoting transfer of learning. The overall strategy focused on pre-service, in-service, and post-service.
- Piloted new core curriculum for permanency and placement.
- Assisted Santa Clara County in the PQCR process in June 2005.

*The first three years of the Y.O.U.T.H. Training Project included pilot trainings, conference presentations and full day and shorter workshops. In year 1 (2002 - 2003), 465 social workers were trained in full day workshops (more people attended, but some did not sign in). Training was in the following 36 counties: Alameda, Butte, Colusa, Contra Costa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, King, Lake, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, Napa, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benito, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tehama, Tulare, Trinity, Ventura and Yolo.

In 2003 – 2004, 300 participants were trained including a number of students in MSW programs (San Francisco State University, University of California @Berkeley, California State University Humboldt, San Jose State University) and a couple of counties (San Francisco, Stanislaus, Monterey, San Mateo and Alameda).

In 2004-2005, training included more than 20 counties with over 2,000 participants (including presentations, conferences and day long workshops).

The BAA, in collaboration with Contra Costa County, was involved in a multi-year training project, from spring 2002 to June 2004, on cultural competence. The project had three phases: planning & organization; assessment; and implementation which resulted in 19 training days with 646 participants. Attendance was consistent throughout, and improved as the series continued through the year. This demonstrates a genuine concern for, and interest in, cultural competency among the Contra Costa County staff and service providers. Interestingly, many participants primarily attended workshops that focused on their own ethnicity and culture. In future trainings, steps will be taken to promote more cross-cultural learning among participants who come from diverse ethnic groups. Participants gained useful knowledge and perspective from the training, especially appropriate vocabulary and terminology to be used in their practice and strategies and methods for working respectfully and sensitively with diverse client groups. To further its goal of replicating this project in other areas of the State and

nation, the BAA and Contra Costa County successfully secured two foundation grants (Stuart Foundation and Walter S. Johnson Foundation) to extend youth training to other counties in the Bay Area over the next two years.

Inter University Consortium-Los Angeles County (IUC)

<http://iuc.sppsr.ucla.edu/>

The IUC is comprised of California State University at Long Beach and California State University at Los Angeles; University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); and the University of Southern California (USC). The IUC is under contract with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services to provide comprehensive training for the county's child welfare professionals. Additionally, IUC contracts provide a Los Angeles County specific Master of Social Work (MSW) stipend program that requires participants to work in Los Angeles County after graduation. As of February 2004, over 250 students have received stipends. In 2004/2005, there were 60 MSW and 12 BSW students and for 2005/2006, there are 62 MSW and 13 BSW students.

The Training Evaluation System incorporates several tools to appraise trainee learning and program performance. The Proficiency Exam evaluates the amount of learning mastered by trainees in the Children's Social Workers (CSW) Core Academy. The results of the exam are presented in the form of an individualized feedback report to the trainee's supervisor. Participant Reaction Reports gather information on the reaction to training by all participants. Other tools include CSW Core Academy reunion evaluations and Core Academy evaluations.

In October 2004, Los Angeles County co-hosted with the Children's Research Center (CRC), a national conference on Structured Decision Making (SDM). Over 220 participants attended the conference representing jurisdictions from across the United States and Australia. Of the attendees, 75 were staff from Los Angeles County. Workshops for supervisors and managers were provided both days. Counties and other states were able to share experiences in implementing and utilizing SDM.

ONGOING TRAINING ACTIVITIES

California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC)

<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/>

The CDSS partners with the CalSWEC to facilitate the integration of education and practice to assure effective, culturally competent service delivery to the people of California. CalSWEC, based at the University of California, Berkeley, is the nation's largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners. It is a consortium of the State's 17 accredited social work graduate schools, the 58 California county departments of social services and mental health, the CDSS, and the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. CalSWEC is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the following projects:

The Regional Training Academy Coordination Project

In this project, CalSWEC supports the CDSS in its mission to coordinate training resources throughout the State. Highlights for fiscal year 2004/2005 include:

- Co-chaired (with the CDSS) the STEC
- Planned and facilitated the 8th Annual National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium. In its eighth year, the Symposium is widely known as the premier national event for training evaluation in the Human Services. The National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA) gave CalSWEC a special recognition award for the Symposium in 2003.
- Planned and facilitated the 3rd Annual Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training, a forum to present and discuss the issues of culture, fairness and over-representation in child welfare for the training community.
- Planned and co-facilitated (with the CWDA and the Children and Family Policy Institute) the Leadership Symposium on Fairness and Equity, a forum for leaders and managers in the CWS system to discuss these same issues.
- Developed the Common Framework for Evaluation of Child Welfare Training, which guides training evaluation efforts for statewide and regional training activities.

California Social Work Title IV-E Project

Through the Title IV-E Project, the California Social Work Education Committee (CalSWEC) coordinates and supports Master of Social Work (MSW) programs in the State's 17 accredited schools of social work, as well as Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) programs in three of the member schools. Since last year, three new BSW programs, (California State Universities in Chico, Fresno and Long Beach) and one new full-time MSW program (California State University, Humboldt) has been added. Overall, the additional new slots for students total 100 and total number of students is 859. It is anticipated that in the next school year there will be an increase of 43 students.

The MSW and BSW programs are being offered at the California State Universities at Bakersfield, Chico, East Bay, Fresno, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Bernardino, Stanislaus, Humboldt, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose, Also the programs are offered at University of California schools in Berkeley, Los Angeles and Southern California and at Loma Linda University.

The MSW programs, each of which follows a specialized child welfare curriculum, are designed to increase the number of professionally-trained social workers in the public child welfare workforce, as well as increase the ethnic diversity of the workforce. The BSW program offers a child welfare concentration in the senior undergraduate year and prepares graduates to work in entry level public child welfare positions. Students commit to a number of years of employment equal to the period for which they receive aid. Priority for financial aid is given to current county employees and persons who reflect the populations they serve. The Title IV-E project also conducts substantial outcomes and evaluation activities.

Program highlights for 2004/2005 include:

- Addition of California State University, Humboldt as a CalSWEC member school admitting Title IV-E MSW students.
- Continued support and development of the Title IV-E BSW Project, including ongoing development of process and program evaluation components. Planned and facilitated meetings of the BSW Phase I Planning Group.
- Completion of the revised online version of the New Graduate Survey, an annual survey in which recent graduates are asked to examine the relationship between their academic programs and their work in the field of public child welfare.
- Completion of the 2004 California Workforce Study, a statewide survey conducted with the approval and cooperation of the CDSS and the CWDA. The survey examined staff and supervisor characteristics, turnover rates, length of service, caseload sizes and position vacancy rates of public child welfare agencies throughout the State. Over 6200 public child welfare workers participated in the survey. The survey showed an increase in child welfare staffing; a decrease in the turnover rate; more child welfare workers with social work degrees (MSW and BSW); a decrease in child welfare workers and supervisors who have some form of graduate degree; an increase in Title IV-E trained personnel; a more experienced professional workforce; a decrease in caseload per core program, but workers who have a combined caseload structure; the need for workers to have multiple skills; the need for increased language capability of the workforce; the need for more bilingual workers; a high degree of interest in the Title IV-E education program; and an interest expressed by administrative support staff and social work assistants in pursuing additional education with Title IV-E support.
- Planned and facilitated a Title IV-E Student Day, an annual conference of MSW and BSW students enrolled in the Title IV-E programs throughout the State. This conference, coordinated by a team of MSW students, provides current and former students with the opportunity to network with peers and learn clinical and theoretical approaches utilized in the field of child welfare but not necessarily taught during the traditional academic calendar. The 2005 conference focused on fairness and equity issues in the child welfare field.

Survey of Graduates:

- Graduates and alumni of this project are employed in 47 of the 58 counties and at the CDSS.
- Graduates have a broad and diverse ethnic and cultural background as well as considerable language diversity.
- Two hundred thirty-three (77 percent) year 2003 Title IV-E MSW graduates found employment in 38 of 58 counties.
- Eighty-two Title IV-E graduates have completed their payback obligation years to child welfare. These MSWs are from earlier and multiple cohorts.*
- Schools have increased the number of Title IV-E graduates in the California front line child welfare work force by 6 percent since 1998.
- Schools have increased the number of Title IV-E graduates in child welfare supervisory positions by 100 percent since 1998.

- Title IV-E graduates who remain in public child welfare after they completed payback is approximately 83 percent, an overall retention rate based on students who have responded to CalSWEC surveys since 1993.
- Seventy-seven percent of current welfare workers and supervisors without baccalaureate degrees would like to obtain a BSW degree.

*There were 275 Title IV-E MSW graduates in academic year 2002-2003. These MSWs initially had until December of 2003 to secure employment in public child welfare. However, for that cohort only, a 6-month extension was granted due to the hiring freezes in many of the counties. To date, only a very small proportion could possibly have completed their 2, 3, or 4 year payback obligation. Any MSWs who have finished would have to have been hired and verified as employed immediately upon graduation. According to CalSWEC records, this was true for less than 50 (18%) of the graduates. The rest were hired some time after graduation and many of the MSWs were hired during the extension period. The graduates who were part-time students have 36-48 months of work requirement and could not complete the work obligation until June of 2006 at the earliest. The majority of the graduates who began their payback obligation immediately upon graduation were part-time students. Only about 35% were full time students. CalSWEC has just received the latest data updates from the schools, and the data on the 2003 graduates who have completed their work requirement are just beginning to come in. The schools must receive a signed verification form from the county agency before the data reflect that the work requirement was completed. The verification forms are usually not sent immediately. Although there are likely to be many 2003 graduates who have completed their work requirement, the data on that cohort will not likely show up until CalSWEC receives the updates for September 2005 and beyond.

Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice (RCFFP)
<http://humanservices.ucdavis.edu/resource/>

The RCFFP supports a variety of initiatives and practice approaches that are consistent with family-centered and strengths based practice, including: Family to Family, Wraparound services, Family Group Decision Making, Integrated Services. Additionally, the RCFFP has provided training to juvenile probation officers and supported the Foster Youth Transition Project.

RCFFP has:

- Developed a two day curriculum for probation officer that focuses on developing sound, behavioral case plans with youth and their families, concurrent planning and termination of parental rights. Five regional training sessions have been completed with 109 probation officers in attendance. Four additional trainings have been scheduled through the end of May 2005 with an anticipated participation of 129 probation officers.
- Provided a workshop for probation officers focusing on quality assessment of juvenile sex offenders. Two trainings have been completed for 76 officers and five trainings are scheduled through June 2005 for an estimated 170 participants.

- Hosted forums in April 2005, in Davis and in Los Angeles, entitled “Strengths: Forging Practice and Science” with Martin E Seligman, PhD, as the trainer.
- Co-sponsored with The American Humane Society, a conference on Family Group Decision Making in June 2005.

EASTFIELD MING QUONG FAMILY PARTNERSHIP INSTITUTE (EMQ-FPI)

<http://www.emq.org/about/index.html>

EMQ-FPI continues to provide on site technical assistance to counties and lead agencies, including open forums for all county partnerships. EMQ FPI provides coaching and mentoring at the child and family team level. They continue to assist the CDSS in conducting site reviews for fidelity of the California Wraparound model.

EMQ FPI has:

- Provided tailored, solution-focused training to counties as they develop and adjust Wraparound programs that fit the county’s unique situation. The provider assisted counties with the systemic integration of Wraparound and other initiatives.
- Provided on site technical assistance to counties and lead agencies including open forums for all county partners.
- Provided coaching and mentoring at the child and family team level.
- Provided technical assistance to counties that want to expand their wraparound programs pursuant to the Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) requirements.
- Scheduled site visits to eight counties by June 30, 2005, to assess and/or respond to any needs or requests from existing Wraparound programs that are at various stages of implementation. In addition, the site reviews assessed the fidelity of the Wraparound program.
- Offered two annual Wraparound Trainings for Trainers. The training in Southern California was held in April 2005, and in Northern California in May 2005.

EMQ provided training/technical assistance to a total of 26 counties and 750 county staff.

Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC)

The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) curriculum teaches counties how to effectively and efficiently study, test, evaluate and implement changes in child welfare services practice. Learning sessions are held in which the counties gather together for face-to-face learning, strategizing and networking. These sessions are led by national experts as faculty who mentor the participating county teams. Counties are focusing on the following subjects: the intake structure as a standardized approach to assessment of safety, risk, protective capacity and needs; and the three pathways of service response.

Through the BSC this year:

- Eleven pilot counties began to use a Differential Response approach.

- Training and technical assistance was provided to these counties and 31 other counties on how to implement this new system.
- The number of training sessions has increased.
- Counties worked collaboratively and reported their progress; they received technical assistance regarding their work and got feedback and insights from other counties.
- An extranet was developed and is used as a method for the counties to learn from each other and to receive the input of the faculty relating to specific topic areas.
- A total of 43 counties received the BSC training during this year.

In the coming year, the BSC will meet with county representatives to solicit their input and recommendations for further refinements that would be helpful to the counties. At this time, it is expected that the current revised format for activities will continue through the end of the contract in June 2006. A final report is due in June 2006, which will include an evaluation of the impact of the BSC in assisting the counties in implementation of Differential Response. A decision will be made prior to that time regarding on continuing the BSC and on what scale, in order to assist the counties in implementation of Differential Response in California.

University of California, Berkeley – Performance Indicators/California Children’s Services Archive

<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/>

The Performance Indicators Project at the Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) provides timely and useful data to California counties regarding children in the CWS system. Through an interagency agreement with the CDSS, CSSR receives quarterly extracts of data from the State’s SACWIS system, CWS/CMS, and reconfigures and analyzes the data to produce information at the State and individual county level. Data is posted on the public website and most tables are updated quarterly. In addition to Statewide and county specific totals for many measures, data are stratified and presented by age, race/ethnicity and gender. CSSR staff continues to provide training to many State and county staff in a variety of ways. Training is administered through the provision of data, through telephone conference call trainings and through numerous on-site trainings throughout the State in individual counties, at County Welfare Directors’ Association (CWDA) regional meetings, at CWDA statewide Children’s Committee meetings, and for CDSS staff.

Training is given to county administrators, managers, and line staff and state administrators and managers. In addition, since the website is public, advocates, legislators and representatives from other agencies serving children and families have access to this information.

Since there are several types of training, durations vary. Onsite visits typically include either half day or full day sessions. CWDA monthly meetings occur over 2 half-days each month. County specific conferences generally include half-day sessions. Telephone technical assistance can be anywhere from a few minutes to an hour,

telephone conference calls can be anywhere from 1-3 hours in length. E-mail assistance is ongoing. All types of training are long term.

Most on site training is provided by Barbara Needell, MSW, PhD, Principal Investigator on the Performance Indicators Project. In addition, Daniel Webster, MSW, PhD, Project Director, conducts some onsite training. Phone and e-mail conference calls, and responses on demand are handled by Drs. Needell and Webster, along with several PhD student Graduate Student Researchers and the webperson, Helen Kim.

Virtually all of the work on the Project is directly or indirectly a training activity. In addition to the time required to reconfigure, run, test, and post the data quarterly, staff spend much time creating training tools (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, Excel spreadsheets with graphs, etc.), and working with State and county staff to understand the data and use the tools. Then, this acquired knowledge and skill is used to present data to other child welfare staff and community partners. This work has been extremely useful to county staff who have responsibility for data entry, and has resulted in improved data quality.

CWS System Improvements Implementation

In conjunction with the CDSS, 11 pilot counties are in the process of implementing CWS System Improvements that will create an outcome-oriented approach to reducing the incidence of families and children entering the CWS system. The CDSS provided funding to counties for training CWS staff and selected county partners to ensure that the CWS System Improvements are successfully implemented. The three primary areas are:

- Safety Assessment
- Differential Response
- Permanency and Youth Transition

During State fiscal year 2004-05, three statewide workgroups developed guidelines, protocols and tools related to the three primary areas listed above. The guidelines, protocols and tools provided additional support to county level training agendas.

From March 2005 through June 2006, five training sessions are being provided to approximately 250-300 county directors, program managers and fiscal officers. Also scheduled are two forums, with an anticipated attendance of 150-200 county staff at each forum. The goal is to share fiscal strategies among counties and to help maximize limited funding for child welfare-related purposes.

Special Start Training Program

www.mills.edu/specialstart/program.html

The Special Start Training Program at Mills College was developed to provide a training program for community professionals in California about the developmental and behavioral needs specific to high-risk newborns, who are graduates of the newborn intensive care nursery.

In federal fiscal year 2004, 400 professionals and 350 foster parents completed the core training program which is called the Family Infant Relationship Support Training (FIRST). A website has been established that describes the training program and permits on-line registration for classes. The website offers on-line training resources, in both English and Spanish, in the form of videotaped vignettes that demonstrate patterns of high risk infant behavior.

CWS/CMS Training

<http://www.hwcws.cahwnet.gov/training.asp>

The CWS/CMS is currently operational in all 58 counties and serves approximately 19,000 State and county CWS workers. A standardized statewide curriculum is available to all State and county staff working in the CWS program.

A separate CWS/CMS training allocation (CWS/CMS staff development) is provided to counties to train staff on how to use the CWS/CMS. Counties use these funds to provide local system training to new staff, staff whose functions within the program are changing, or special training to meet county or individual staff member specific needs. Classes include both locally delivered training similar to that provided under the statewide contract curriculum, as well as locally determined training priorities, which may not be readily available at a statewide level.

Since June 2003, statewide CWS/CMS classroom training has been provided by the University of California, Davis Extension Program. Statewide classroom training includes the following: New User Training, Business Objects Training/County Access to Data Training and County On-Site Refresher/Advanced Training. The CWS/CMS training region “simulates” the actual CWS/CMS for training purposes. This ensures counties can train their users on replicated CWS/CMS cases without negatively impacting the production environment. This tool is used to train new users, to refresh the skills of staff, to train staff on recent application changes and to test changes to new releases of the system.

Many counties participated in CWS/CMS Statewide Training offered to staff from July 2004-February 2005. Training included: 56 days of New User Training with 417 participants; 42 days of County On-Site Refresher/Advanced Training with 338 total participants; and 4 days of Business Objects Training with 23 participants.

Legislative changes have resulted in State positions approved for the Health and Human Services Agency Data Center (HHSDC) to form a CWS/CMS Training Unit. The training unit started on October 1, 2004.

The Training Unit:

- Develops, updates, and maintains all of the State's CWS/CMS training tools and materials, including Scenario Manager, Computer Based Training, On-Line Release Notes, Quick Reference Guides, and the standard training curriculum that is maintained on HHSDC's website. Updating and maintenance is performed on an ongoing basis to ensure that training tools and materials provide statewide uniformity on how CWS/CMS should be used to record information and data.
- Provides oversight of CDSS vendor contracts for statewide classroom training.
- Manages the HHSDC Training Region contract.
- Provides training for trainers (including county, State, and contract trainers).

In June 2004, the ACF conducted an Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) Assessment Review to validate and verify whether CWS/CMS gathers, extracts, and reports AFCARS data accurately. The ACF required the CDSS to develop and implement an AFCARS improvement plan and set timeframes to modify CWS/CMS programming to meet the required data collection standards. Because of the scheduled tasks related to the re-hosting of the system's database, program changes related to the PIP, and the re-procurement of the system maintenance contract, the CDSS has scheduled, or is in the process of scheduling, AFCARS changes over a two-year period. The CDSS will also address the data entry issues identified in the AFCARS Assessment Review improvement plan as part of CWS/CMS (SACWIS) training as well as in an All County Information Notice.

Perinatal Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program (formerly Options for Recovery Perinatal Program)

The CDSS has the authority and funding to plan and implement services for court dependent children, aged 0-60 months, residing in out-of-home care that are substance-exposed or test positive for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). All counties submit a county plan for approval to CDSS, specifically outlining a proposed budget, budget justification and detailed job specification for each requested staff position within the Perinatal Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program.

County allocations and expenditures are controlled by CDSS. The responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of program policies and procedures to ensure compliance with state law also falls within the purview of the CDSS. The CDSS provides training and technical assistance to all participating Perinatal Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program county staff. Emphasis is placed on assuring that all staff responsible for implementing the Perinatal Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program at the local level has an understanding of the needs of the target population and the local resources to serve them.

The following counties are currently participating in the Program: Alameda, Butte, Glenn, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Francisco, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz and Shasta. The program is funded by federal, State and county share consistent with the normal sharing ratio for child welfare services. Seventy-five percent of the Title

IV-E federal funds are applied to the training component and 50 percent of the Title IV-E funds are applied to the recruitment component, after applying the current foster care federal discount rate. The remaining sharing ratios are absorbed through State and county share-of-costs. The respite care component does not include federal participation and is solely funded by state and county funds.

The CDSS uses existing federal and State administrative policies to implement the statewide Perinatal Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program. Counties are allowed flexibility, to the extent possible, in preparing their county plan, taking into consideration the diverse and county-specific needs as well as the target population.

The philosophy of this program recognizes that drug and alcohol abuse is a disease that requires treatment and compassion. The service delivery consists of interagency collaboration, targeted recruitment, specialized training, respite care and support services for foster parents and federally eligible relative caregivers.

In the last year, there have been:

- Increased numbers of certified foster parents and licensed homes.
- Additional classes/workshops offered by the counties.
- Additional advisory boards formed by the counties.
- Additional recruitment campaigns by counties.
- More respite care used with increase in respite payments by counties.
- Increased specialized care rate increments providing the ability to recruit and retain foster parents.

Some of the barriers to overcome:

- Geographical – coordinating partners in program.
- Proper placement of qualified children in the appropriate homes.
- Financial – Program travel limitations, limited networking.
- Networking/establishing liaison.

Plans for the coming year and beyond include:

- Increasing the number of foster homes that are certified in the program.
- Developing regional visiting centers for supervised visits.
- Including birth parents in all available training.
- Developing a therapeutic preschool appropriate for foster to attend.
- Continuing foster parent recruitment and training.

Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP) Program

The STAP provides specialized recruitment, training and services to pre-adoptive/adoptive parents of children born HIV positive and/or substance exposed. The program is designed to assist the adoption of medically fragile children who are

dependent children of the court, have an adoption case plan and reside with pre-adoptive or adoptive parents. More than 551 people, representing multiple counties, participated in the STAP.

Participating counties are required to provide a training curriculum which includes all of the following:

- Orientation
- Effect of alcohol and controlled substances on the fetus and children
- Normal and abnormal infant and early childhood development
- Special medical needs and disabilities
- Recovery from addiction to alcohol and controlled substances
- Self-care for the caregiver
- HIV/AIDS in children
- Issues in parenting and providing lifelong permanency and substance abuse prevention to children with prenatal alcohol and other controlled substances exposure
- Issues specific to caring for a child who tests HIV positive

There were no programmatic changes to the STAP Program in 2004/2005. However, there was a decrease in the number of counties participating (six counties are currently participating, which are 10 less counties participating than in the previous year), which appears to be caused by county budgetary and staffing problems.

The CDSS will continue to provide technical assistance to those counties participating in the program and to any counties that submit a plan to participate in the program.

Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Training (CATTa)

<http://www.cattacenter.org/>

The CDSS is required to use private, non-profit agencies to provide the training and technical assistance in specific areas. The agencies are responsible for implementing three primary program objectives: 1) training and technical assistance; 2) development of regional resource consortiums; and 3) information development and distribution.

For the training from July 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004, there were a total of 21 sessions and 1685 participants.

Training included the following:

- Substance Abuse & Child Abuse, Part II-27 participants
- Spanish-Speaking Peer Review Meeting-5 participants
- MDIC/T Peer Review-Northern California-21 participants
- Child Abuse Investigations for First Responders-75 participants
- Tulare County Child Abuse Prevention Council Strategic Planning-10 participants
- 18th Annual Children's Network Conference: Connecting the Pieces: Family Violence, Substance Abuse, and Children-At-Risk-477 participants
- Regional Resource Coalition Coordinator Meeting-8 participants

- Child Abduction Intervention & Resource Training-121 participants
- Current Trends & Legal Perspectives in Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Investigations-144 participants
- Fall Children's Conference-128 participants
- Working with Children Exposed to Trauma and Violence-366 participants
- Child Forensic Interview Specialist Training on the Investigation of Child Maltreatment-63 participants
- CFIT Clinic for Spanish-Speaking Child Forensic Interview Specialists-5 participants
- Child Abuse Prevention Council Strategic Planning, San Luis Obispo-28 participants
- Child Forensic Interview Specialist Training: Training for Trainers-21 participants
- Structured Interviews in Child Sexual Assault Cases: Maximizing Competency & Minimizing Suggestibility-77 participants
- The Impact of High Conflict Divorce Upon Children and Families-109 participants.

At this time, we do not have the training information from January 1, 2005, and it will not be available from the grantees until September 20, 2005. The grantees need a minimum of 45 days from end of State fiscal year to compile and prepare a report.

The CATTA grant also has:

- Expanded the Statewide network to over 14,000 contacts stored in one database.
- Maintained over 1600 cataloged resources via the CATTA web site.
- Held the first annual Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) conference in April 2005.
- Released the Promising Practice Guide, a desktop reference illustrating CAPC best practices.
- Completed regional coordination empowerment activity with CAPCs titled "Community Action Planning".

The CDSS has initiated preliminary discussions with Sonoma State, California Institute on Human Services, the existing grantee, for a two year extension and augmentation of the CATTA grant. The new scope of work activities for the coming year will include peer review, county liaisons inclusion and training in collaboration with the regional resource consortiums, and intensified cultural competence strategies including special needs communities.

Parent Leadership Training

<http://www.parentsanonymous.org/pahtml/paAbout.html>

Since 1999, Parents Anonymous® Inc., has been partnering with CDSS to provide parent leadership training and technical assistance to child abuse prevention agencies across the State to encourage and support shared leadership. Parents Anonymous® Inc.'s, grant objectives include: the provisions of intensive training and technical

assistance to three counties per fiscal year; the provision of four additional general trainings; and the expansion of the California Parent Leadership Team. Additionally, a news letter is distributed statewide twice annually. This grant is funded through June 30, 2006.

One hundred nineteen parents have received Parent Leadership Training. Through this training, the outcome has been: parents are able to take on leadership roles such as co-trainer, contributor to written materials, participant at conferences and working meetings, grant reviewer, participant in quality improvement and evaluation activities, participant in needs/strengths assessment processes, public speaker, peer review team member, advisory board member, participant in focus groups and other important roles. Parents have received recognition by Boards of Supervisors, numerous agencies and Parents Anonymous Inc. The parents are able to raise public awareness about the important role parents play in shaping the child abuse prevention agenda.

Activities this year have included:

- Co-sponsored National Parent Leadership Month in February 2005.
- Provided intensive training to the Central Regional Resource Consortium, Inland Empire Region Consortium, and the Sacramento County CAPC.
- Recruited three additional members to the California Parent Leadership Team.
- Provided ongoing training and technical assistance to the North Coast Regional Resource Consortium, Calaveras CAPC, Santa Barbara County CAPC, and the Tulare County CAPC.

The Parent Leadership Grant will focus on the expansion of the California Parent Leadership Team, updating the counties receiving intensive training during FY 2005-2006. The Office of Child Abuse and Prevention's Prevention Network Development Unit is actively collaborating with Parents Anonymous to showcase the Shared Leadership Principals during National Parent Leadership Month in February 2006.

Family Support Training Model/Family Resource and Support Training and Technical Assistance Project ("Strategies")

The Family Support Training Model/Family Resource and Support Training and Technical Assistance Project (Project) provides training and technical assistance to prevention/early intervention-focused family resource centers (FRC) and family support programs through a network of three regional training centers known as "Strategies."

"Strategies" this year has:

- Delivered four FRC Core trainings to a total of 183 participants.
- Presented two Peer Review trainings to 11 FRS with a total of 38 participants.
- Conducted 10 Statewide teleconferences addressing FRC fundamentals and nonprofit management issues.
- Participated in a series of teleconferences with a total of 73 FRS Statewide.
- Conducted eight capacity building events for 198 participants.
- Presented Facilitative Leadership training to 23 RFCS.

- Presented 10 trainings on promising practices, home visits and supervision totaling 80 hours provided to 448 attendees.
- Maintained a Statewide e-mail listserv, "Strategies Announce", that allows more than 1,100 subscribers to network with each other.
- Redesigned the website to be more user-friendly.
- Distributed the "Working Strategies" quarterly newsletter to 4,500 subscribers.
- Included networking activities in all Strategies trainings and workshops.
- Provided approximately 50 hours of technical assistance and training to local citizen review panels in Kern, Alameda, San Mateo and Napa counties.
- Provided training/technical support for the Supporting Father Involvement Study.

The grantees have met or exceeded their objectives. The objectives and activities/results are noted in detail on pages 116 through 119.

The main challenge for this Project includes the successful incorporation of training activities related to Differential Response as they pertain to path one and path two families. Discussions are currently underway to decide how best to implement these activities over the coming three years.

The first three year grant term for the Strategies project is set to end on June 30, 2005. Negotiations are underway for a new grant cycle that will begin July 1, 2005, and end on June 30, 2008. Consequently, some of the objectives and activities will change to meet the needs of counties and their community partners as Differential Response continues to be implemented.

Training for Mental Health and County Staff Serving Foster Children

This contract provides training to Department of Mental Health (DMH) and county staff who provide services to Title IV-E Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) children. The training provided to DMH staff covers such topics as cultural competence, managed care, children's system of care development, integrated services partnerships and preparation for psychological rehabilitation. The training will enhance the ability of social workers to develop better case plans that provide more effective services for foster children. Training components will include a wide variety of topics that will give DMH and county staff a greater ability to provide improved and more comprehensive services to foster children.

The current contract is for the term July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2005. This contract will be renewed for the term July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2008. The current contract allows for \$678,000 federal financial participation reimbursement to DMH based on the total costs of the contract which are \$3,228,000. This payment is made in accordance with 45 CFR 1356.60(b). The federal financial participation reimbursable amount, each fiscal year, is \$226,000. In fiscal year 2003-2004, DMH provided training to approximately 7,000 individuals. Of this total, 15-20 percent (1050-1400) were State and county child welfare staff.

Training for Group Home Staff

The California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 5 require group home staff be trained regarding the children served in the group home. Section 84064 requires the group home administrator to develop a training and orientation plan for group home staff. Section 84065 requires the plan have an overview of the client population served by the group home and training on the group home regulations. The training plan also includes training on the needs and services plan that is required for each child in care. Section 84068.2 requires the group home social work staff to develop the needs and services plan based on the needs of the child as outlined in the case plan with the child and the placement social worker. The group home must obtain written approval from the child's placement social worker on the needs and services plan. If the child is 16 or older the needs and services plan incorporates the child's TILP in the case plan and outlines the group home role in meeting the child's goals in the needs and services plan. Further, Section 84072, Personal Rights, states, (25) "To work and develop job skills at an age-appropriate level that is consistent with state law. (27) To attend Independent Living Program classes and activities if he or she meets age requirements."

The child's social worker must meet the Manual of Policies and Procedures, Section 30-504.1, Service Delivery Methods: "1. Independent living services shall be provided to all eligible youth, based on needs, services and goals identified in the most recently completed Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP)." The placement social work and the group home work together to meet the child needs as outlined when the child is placed in the facility.

Structured Decision Making (SDM)

The purpose of Structured Decision Making (SDM) is to assist child welfare workers in assessing risk; to assist counties in targeting services to children who are at greatest risk of maltreatment; and to improve outcomes for children and families such as the reduction of the recurrence of child maltreatment. Workers are trained to use the tools, which consist of a safety and risk assessment, family strengths and needs assessment, and reunification tools. The tools are used throughout the life of a case, from the intake at the hotline until the child is reunified with his or her family. The only time the use of the SDM tools ceases is when it is determined that the child may not be reunified with his or her parents, and the case goal is changed from reunification to permanent placement.

Training on the SDM tools is a two step process. In California, child welfare workers are trained to use SDM by either attending a class at the Regional Training Academies, or by being trained by county trainers. Workers gain an understanding of the philosophy and research behind SDM through the training. They learn to use SDM by examining and practicing each tool in the SDM model. The second step is to learn to use the web-based tools. Staff from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency's Children's Research Center conduct the training for trainers in each county. Supervisors and

managers are trained separately, and are trained prior to line staff being trained. They are trained using an additional module, which includes conducting supervisory case reviews, producing and utilizing management reports, and motivating staff to fully utilize SDM.

During State fiscal year 2004-05, 44 days of training and technical assistance was provided to 25 counties by staff from the Children's Research Center. In addition, during the year, trainers at the Regional Training Academies and staff at the CDSS also received refresher training through the Children's Research Center on the recent modifications to SDM.

Through the Northern California Regional Training Academy, 21 classes on SDM have already been held during the State fiscal year and 237 participants received training. Ten more classes are scheduled through June 30, 2005. Through the Central California Regional Training Academy, 12 days of training have already been provided on SDM in this fiscal year. For next year, the Children's Research Center will be providing training to new SDM counties, as well as training all SDM counties on the modifications made to webSDM in order to meet the requirements of the State's standardized safety system. In addition, for counties implementing differential response, modifications have been made to SDM to be able to record that information, and training on this will be included.

National Council on Crime and Delinquency/Children's Research Center's (NCCD/CRC) SafeMeasures Reporting Service

The contractor, NCCD/CRC, has designed tools and training, SafeMeasures, that support the CWS Outcomes and Accountability Review System. The training and tools are designed to aid the counties and the CDSS in better understanding data collection, analysis and reporting techniques aimed at ensuring compliance with Division 31 regulations, Titles IV-B and IV-E requirements, and improving State and federal outcome indicators. SafeMeasures provides counties with the tools and knowledge to conduct a more thorough assessment of their child welfare system, identify data trends, and assist in the allocation of resources.

Training is conducted by Children's Research Center staff in county offices Statewide for social workers, supervisors, and managers, and consists of a full day of training. The contractor also offers technical assistance as needed. During State fiscal year 2004-05, approximately ten days of training were provided under the contract.

Child Death Review Team Training

The CDSS has contracted with the Interagency Council on Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) for county child death review team training. ICAN provided training to over 100 local child death review team members in five regions. The training provided information to team members on properly identifying child abuse and neglect related deaths and review team processes. (See additional information under Resulting Programmatic Efforts to Identify and Prevent Child Fatalities.)

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Training.

The CDSS had made tentative plans to provide ICPC training to California placing agencies and ICPC liaisons through Regional Training Sessions. Those plans have been modified because of staff turn-over and the national efforts to re-write the Compact. At the present time, the CDSS schedules quarterly regional meetings with California ICPC liaisons. These meetings provide the opportunity for CDSS to consult with County staff and clarify ICPC requirements. The CDSS met with Southern County Liaisons in March and held a conference call in June. Six of the eight counties participated in these meetings. The CDSS met with Northern Counties in January, April and August with 19-21 counties participating. The CDSS is also scheduling meetings to provide technical assistance to county staff for the out-of-state group home placement of children. Additionally, staff from the Out-Of-State Placement Policy Unit (OSSPPU) are continually available by phone to provide technical assistance to parties involved in the interstate placement of a child.

The CDSS has long-term plans of providing training when the revisions to the current Compact are completed. It is projected that the provisions of the new Compact will take effect after 2006.

Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) Training for County Liaisons.

The proposed training for ICAMA liaisons has been modified. The CDSS has a representative who is a member of the Executive Committee for the Association of Administrators of the ICAMA (AAICAMA). The AAICAMA is planning to release ICAMA training on compact disc (CD) by early 2006. The CDSS plans to postpone its plans for training until after the release of this CD. However, in the interim, the CDSS OSSPPU staff provides training and technical assistance by phone to county ICAMA administrators.

NOTEWORTHY PROJECTS, CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS

The Independent Living Practice (ILP) Training Institute

The ILP Training Institute was held May 2-4, 2005, and provided information to a wide variety of stakeholders regarding the federal John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and State ILP requirements. Additionally, promising practice methods were presented to assist the participants in achieving program compliance and ensuring positive outcomes for foster youth ages 16-21.

Representatives from 41 of 58 counties attended the Institute for a total of approximately 300 attendees. 82 percent of the attendees rated the ILP Institute very good to excellent.

National Resource Center-Teen Conference

The CDSS sponsors a Teen Conference for foster youth, ages 16-19, to provide them with a forum to learn about the Independent Living Program, Transitional Housing Placement Program, Medi-Cal and educational opportunities and services. The conference also provides California foster youth with a unique opportunity to network with youth throughout the State. The conference was held June 24-26, 2005 at Sonoma State University.

The Teen Conference was held in July 2005. A total of 18 counties sent approximately 200 youth to the Teen Forum. The forum in general was rated very good to excellent by 86 percent of the attendees. Workshops were rated very good to excellent by 95 percent of the participants.

Annual Training Evaluation Symposium

The annual Training Evaluation Symposium planned and facilitated by the CalSWEC was held in May 2005, at the University of California, Berkeley, and co-sponsored with the CDSS, the National Staff Development and Training Associations of the American Public Human Services Association, and the American Humane Association. This symposium provided a unique opportunity for experts to come to California to inform, problem solve and to enhance California training evaluation efforts. Approximately 60 people attended the symposium.

The symposium is a part of the ongoing contract and training efforts with CalSWEC and does not constitute new training efforts.

Annual California Indian Child Welfare Act Conference

This conference provides training regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) to tribal ICWA workers; tribal advocates, tribal council members and community leaders; law enforcement; child welfare and probation staff; judges; attorneys; foster/adoption

agencies; social services agency personnel; and other interested parties. The mission of the conference is to support positive partnerships between tribes and federal, state and local governments for the benefit of all Indian children. The conference was held in June 2005 with over 125 participants from numerous counties, tribes, tribal organizations, and others who work with Indian children and families.

Capacity Building for Tribal Constituents Project

California Institute on Human Services, Sonoma State University will deliver training to increase coordination, knowledge and skills in implementing ICWA. The training stimulates greater understanding of tribal issues for individuals responsible for making decisions regarding Indian children and their families. Through the training process, participants develop skills on effectively engaging tribal members in cooperative relationships as well as assist tribes in understanding and effectively negotiating with public child welfare agencies. The training better informs participants of the requirements of ICWA and provides strategies to improve compliance. Participants also develop a greater understanding and appreciation of tribal challenges and historical barriers to effective relationships with government representatives. Tribal participants develop effective skills in working with public child welfare agencies.

Although this project was new last year, it was not included in the State's five year Title IV-B Plan. This project is funded at the 75 percent enhanced federal financial participation rate for Child Welfare Services Title IV-E Training.

The training is presented at tribes or tribal organization locations. This training is a long-term training, and is provided through an annual contract that CDSS has with the California Institute on Human Services, Sonoma State University to coordinate the training. Eight six-hour training sessions are being conducted, and the audience is county child welfare and probation staff, family/juvenile court representatives, and tribal representatives.

The total cost for the project is \$150,000, with \$84,375 being claimed under Title IV-E Training; and State General Funds of \$65,625.

This training activity meets the goal of Permanence, objective #7, prepare and support the workforce to help children and families reach positive outcomes and objective #10, ensure that continuity of family relationships and connections are preserved for children in foster care.

The focus on the current year of this project has been to modify the CDSS' existing ICWA training curriculum to better meet the needs of juvenile probation placement officers in the implementation of the requirements. Five Statewide regional trainings focusing on probation and the delinquency process were conducted this fiscal year. The training was delivered to 344 participants from 47 counties. Also, an additional two trainings were conducted focusing on the dependency system and how the county child

welfare staff can fully implement ICWA. The training was delivered to 96 participants from 18 counties.

The curriculum that was developed as part of this project continues to be utilized by the Regional Training Academies when conducting ICWA training for county child welfare staff. Additionally, tribal representatives/advocates that are familiar with this curriculum are being used by the Academies as co-trainers.

The CDSS plans to continue this project into future years.

Indian Child Welfare Act Full Compliance Project

The Judicial Council of California - Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) will support CDSS' commitment to the full implementation of ICWA by providing technical assistance to county child welfare and probation staff, judges, judicial staff and county counsels on the requirements of the Act. The AOC will develop protocols to assure complete understanding of ICWA and will facilitate education by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. The ICWA Full Compliance Project will improve compliance with the ICWA by making available a range of cross discipline facilitation and education services provided by the AOC staff and outside consultants. These services will be tailored to meet the needs of the local county or region.

This project is a new project this year, and was not included in the State's five year Title IV-B Plan. It is funded at the 50 percent federal financial participation rate for Child Welfare Services Title IV-E Training. The technical assistance is provided at local court or other community sites, depending on the size of the audience. Subject matter workshops are conducted regionally, and the training is a long-term training. The training is provided by AOC staff and outside consultants who are subject matter experts.

County/regional ICWA subject matter workshops will be delivered. County facilitation training will be offered to assist counties with communication regarding possible solutions to extremely difficult procedural and process issues. The number of workshops and trainings will be determined by assessment of local needs. The audience is county child welfare and probation staff, state juvenile court judges, commissioners, referees, judicial staff, and attorneys.

The cost for the training is \$100,000. \$50,000 is claimed under Title IV-E Training funding; with State General Funds providing the remaining \$50,000.

This training activity supports the goal of Safety Objective #5, to "ensure that children are maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate". It also meets the goal of Permanence Objective #7, "prepare and support the workforce to help children and families reach positive outcomes" and Permanence Objective #10, "ensure

that continuity of family relationships and connections are preserved for children in foster care”.

The contract for the Project is now in place. There was some delay in hiring qualified individuals to fill positions in the Project; however, all positions have been filled.

ICWA symposiums were held in Garden Grove on June 2, 2005 with more than 130 attendees and in San Francisco on July 6, 2005 with over 150 attendees. The attendees at the symposiums represented numerous county counsels, court officers, child welfare and probation staff as well as tribal representatives.

Tribal Youth

In March 2005, the Public Child Welfare Training Academy (Southern Region), in collaboration with San Diego County Human and Health Services Agency and its Indian Specialty Unit, Indian Health Council, Southern Indian Health Council, Indian Child and Family Welfare Services and the Santa Ysabel Band of Diegueno Indians, held an interdisciplinary seminar for Tribal and non-Tribal managers and supervisors to increase positive outcomes for tribal foster youth.

Native American Social Workers

The Master of Social Work program at California State University, Stanislaus, and the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Project under a special contract with the CalSWEC, has spearheaded a full time effort to recruit students from California's Native American communities to the Title IV-E Master of Social Work program. This is part of the ongoing contract and training efforts with Cal-SWEC. The goal of the program is to improve the perception of both leaders and youth in the Native American community about the role of the university and more specifically about social work in their lives, and to promote the value of a career in public child welfare.

CalSWEC is in the process of conducting a five year review to determine the level of participation of Native American students in the program.

“Through the Eyes of Children of Color in the Child Welfare System” Conference

The Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Project at San Francisco State University with the collaboration of the Bay Area Academy (BAA) held a conference in April 2005, to discuss the over-representation of African American and Latino children in the Child Welfare System. There were 125 attendees for this conference.

This conference is part of the ongoing contract and training efforts with the BAA and Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Project and does not constitute new training efforts.

COUNTY STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Counties provided various levels of in-service training to all their staff, which is described in an annual training plan. Counties are required to adhere to the Staff Development and Training regulations contained in the CDSS' Division 14 of the Manual of Policies and Procedures. These regulations serve as a guide to county welfare departments in the administration of county training programs. Division 14 provides the mandate and structure of county accountability in the development and implementation of training programs, annual training plans, evaluation and training need assessments. These regulations establish claiming and cost reimbursement criteria and guidelines for allowable staff development cost and activities.

The CDSS is in the process of amending the regulations. The proposed regulations will require all new child welfare service workers and supervisors to complete a standardized core training within 12 months of hire. Additionally, they will be required to complete 40 training hours in continuing education within 24 months. The counties will be required to report their training activities on a semi-annual basis. Juvenile probation officers and supervisors, as a part of their ongoing education, will also receive training in child welfare issues.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

The Northern California Children and Family Services Training Academy is updating the current curriculum regarding the Multi Ethnic Placement Act so that it will be available for use throughout the State for existing and new State and county Adoptions workers commencing January 2006. Updating of the curriculum includes strengthening the training related to the interjurisdictional requirements.

The CDSS will be working with the Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children and the Courts (www.courtinfo.ca.gov) to develop joint training in the area of permanency for social workers and county counsel in 10 counties during State fiscal year 2005-2006.

County Counsel/Social Worker Joint Trainings

The purpose of this training activity is to further the IV-B Plan Training and Staff Development Goal of workforce preparation and support (Goal V: Prepare and support the workforce to help children and families reach positive outcomes) through multi-disciplinary training regarding permanency. This goal is achieved by: 1) providing specific training on case planning as related to reunification and other permanent plans; and 2) providing training emphasizing respective participant roles in achieving systemic permanency goals.

This training activity falls under the following category necessary for the administration of the foster care program: preparation for and participation in judicial determinations.

These trainings will be held regionally and will specifically serve 10 counties in the State: Imperial, Los Angeles, Marin, Mendocino, San Diego San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and Stanislaus. These counties have been selected due to current judicial branch projects occurring in these jurisdictions focusing on the court's role in achieving PIP permanency goals.

These training activities are short-term. The duration of specific training programs varies according to type of training offered and audience served.

The trainings will be coordinated and overseen by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC); the AOC will contract with statewide and local training providers with experience in the specific subjects being covered by the trainings.

The basic training program will be comprised of 6 hours as follows:

1. Team Building and Role Definition (1 hour):
 - Legal and ethical requirements of interdisciplinary participants
 - Who are the clients?
2. Case Law and Statutory Framework (1 hour):
3. Case Planning (4 hours):
 - Concurrent Planning
 - Reunification and Reasonable Efforts
 - Other Permanent Plan
 - Parent and Youth Involvement in Case Planning Process
 - Deliverables for Parents and Social Workers
 - Addressing:
 - Legal Permanency
 - Physical Permanency
 - Placement Stability
 - Relational Permanency
 - Relatives – “Relative Finder”
 - Permanent Connection

The training will be provided to social workers, county counsel and court-appointed parents and children's counsel.

The total cost of the training is \$195,964. 1) Application of non-federal discount rate; 2) Costs allocated among participants as follows: social workers @ 75% (enhanced rate), county counsel @ 50%; court-appointed counsel @ 0%. IVE costs total \$92,515; program balance to be paid for by state General Fund.

This training activity addresses:

- Goal II: Sustain Permanence for Children; and
- Goal III: Promote the Well-Being of Children and Families

This training activity will emphasize reasonable efforts as related to both reunification and concurrent planning, and as such will support objectives identified in both Goals II and III of the CFSP.

TRAINING EVALUATION

In the CFSP, the following outcomes were expected in the upcoming year (2004-2005):

- Expand the number of items in the item bank of multiple choice test questions that is being developed and validated for a specific group of core competencies that the counties and RTAs could pull from to develop tests tailored to their curricula.
- Pilot test the item bank and the supporting software.
- Adapt the item bank to the Common Core Curriculum when developed.
- Use embedded evaluation to assess the acquisition of skill—the ability to recognize child maltreatment—in the Common Core Curriculum when developed

As noted below, all of the above outcomes have been met.

The CDSS will use a multi-pronged approach to the evaluation of training programs. To address the ever increasing importance of evaluating training activities, the Macro Evaluation Team was established. The membership is comprised of representatives from the CDSS, county staff development organizations, Regional Training Academies (RTAs), the Resource Center for Family Focused Practice (RCFFP), and the Inter-University Consortium (IUC) in Los Angeles. The Team is charged with making recommendations about Statewide CWS training evaluation that includes the development of a statewide training evaluation framework, as mandated by California's PIP. Counties and RTAs can also access technical assistance from CalSWEC and national experts in training evaluation via the Macro Evaluation Team. This evaluation framework will be first applied with the introduction of the common core curriculum training for new child welfare workers.

Benefits of implementing a framework for training evaluation:

- There will be data about effectiveness of training at multiple levels (a chain of evidence) so that the overall question about the effectiveness of training can be better addressed
- Data about training effectiveness will be based on rigorous evaluation designs
- Curriculum writers and trainers will have data focused on specific aspects of training, allowing for targeted revisions of material and methods of delivery
- Evaluation provides a standardized process for systematic review and evaluation of these different approaches

The plan addresses assessment at seven levels of evaluation, which together are designed to build a “chain of evidence” regarding training effectiveness.

These levels are:

Level 1: Tracking attendance

- Level 2: Formative evaluation of the course (curriculum content and delivery methods)
- Level 3: Satisfaction and opinion of the trainees
- Level 4: Knowledge acquisition and understanding of the trainee
- Level 5: Skills acquisition by the trainee (as demonstrated in the classroom)
- Level 6: Transfer of learning by the trainee (use of knowledge and skill on the job)
- Level 7: Agency/client outcomes - degree to which training affects the achievement of specific agency goals or client outcomes

The above levels are designed to build a “chain of evidence” necessary to provide a foundation for future linking of training outcomes for children and families. Establishing that training leads to an important part of the groundwork for tying training outcomes to program outcomes that is being laid by the field as a whole.

Implementation to date:

- A system has been designed to track attendance and transmit to the CDSS.
- Standards and processes have been developed for common core curriculum.
- Each RTA/IUC or county uses evaluations to obtain information regarding the satisfaction and opinion of trainees.
- Approximately 250 multiple choice items have been written, reviewed, and researched for evidence based practice in the six priority content areas.
- Test item banking software to manage the test construction, validation, and administration processes has been selected and purchased, and initial training on its use has been conducted.
- Priority area of skills evaluation is in child maltreatment identification and the curriculum was piloted in April 2005.
- Transfer of learning has been evaluated in the mentoring programs. Also transfer of learning is included in the core curricula.

From July-December 2005:

- Data from knowledge and skills tests will be analyzed, leading to initial validation of assessment instruments and protocols.
- A process for using assessment findings to review and revise curricula will be developed.
- A study will be designed to measure the effect of mentoring on transfer of specific skill from the classroom to the job.

Policy Guidance and Information Provided to Counties

- CFL 03/04-65 (June 14, 2004) Fiscal Year (FY) 2004/05 Foster Parent Training and Recruitment
- CFL 04/05-11 (August 11, 2004) Fiscal Year (FY) 2004/05 Perinatal Substance Abuse (SA) /HIV Infant Program (Formerly Known as Options For Recovery) State General Fund (SGF) Allocation
- ACIN I-42-04 issued June 21, 2004 provided instructions regarding new federal requirements based on Public Law 108-36

- ACIN I-43-04 issued September 7, 2004 provided answers to frequently asked questions regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act
- ACIN I-75-04 issued on December 17, 2004 provided information on Fairness and Equity Issues within Child Welfare Services
- ACIN I-85-04 issued on December 20, 2004 provided information regarding Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Training Issues
- ACIN I-11-05 issued on March 16, 2005 provides instructions on how to request Training and Technical Assistance from the National Resource Centers
- ACL 05-06 issued on May 24, 2005, directs the counties to incorporate the new learning outcomes/objectives in regards to Resource Family Training.

Evaluation and Technical Assistance

EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Supporting Father Involvement Study

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) entered into an Interagency Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley to conduct a study to 1) determine the effectiveness of a particular intervention to increase positive father involvement; and, 2) measure organizational culture change to determine if the family resource center implementing the intervention becomes more inclusive of fathers in other programs and services. The intervention is being implemented in Sacramento, Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Tulare and Yuba Counties. Grantees are the CWS agencies in these counties which are required to partner with a local family resource center for implementation. The target population are co-parenting couples with children age seven and younger. Families are randomly assigned into one of three groups: 1) a one time educational presentation about how positive father involvement improves outcomes for children; 2) a 16 week (2 hours per week) group meeting for fathers; and, 3) a 16 week group for couples (2 hours per week). All project participants will receive case management services. Data will be collected through a battery of assessments that will be administered three times during each family's participation in the study. It is anticipated that the final report will be issued in spring 2007.

Significant Accomplishments

The principal investigators were retained through contracts with the Connecticut Department of Mental Health (to retain investigators from Yale University Medical School) and with UC Berkeley. Project meetings, to provide face to face training and technical assistance to staff of the five sites, were held in January, April, and October of 2004. A project listserv that facilitates communication, training, and technical assistance was launched in 2004. All five clinical study sites (five family resource centers) began enrolling families into the study and providing intervention services. The data collection process was also fully implemented.

Barriers/Unexpected Events

The Sacramento County site experienced difficulty identifying and engaging target population families, and it was decided that the intervention was not a good fit for the identified community. The CDSS and Sacramento County mutually reached an agreement that allowed the County to end its participation in the study and to provide alternate services to fathers who reside in the neighborhood of the FRC. Subsequently, the four remaining sites needed to plan to serve an additional 60 families to ensure that 300 co-parenting couples needed for the study complete intervention groups. In order to reach the target number of the study, the time period has been extended from September 30, 2006, to June 30, 2007.

Future Plans

The project will proceed as planned with the remaining four counties.

Promoting Safe and Stable Families

THE PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES (PSSF) PROGRAM

California continues to use the PSSF grant to operate and expand on a PSSF program that incorporates services covering the federally identified categories of Family Preservation, Community-Based Family Support, Time-Limited Family Reunification, and Adoption Promotion and Support.

To verify that the CDSS has met the non-supplantation requirements for Title IV-B subpart 2 programs in Section 432(a) (7) (A) of the Act, we have compared the State and local funds spent in the State Family Preservation programs for FY 92-93 and FY 02-03. The State Family Preservation program is the state level program that relates directly to the Title IV-B subpart 2 programs. In FY 1992-93, CDSS spent \$13,138,422 in State and local funds for this program compared to \$29,824,116 spent in FY 02-03.

CDSS has also verified that zero Title IV-B subpart 1 funds were used for foster care maintenance payments, adoptions assistance, and child day care related to employment or training for employment in FY 2003 compared to the maximum allowed of \$4,550,230 (California FY 1979 child welfare services total funds).

Selection Process for County PSSF Programs

California allocates approximately 85 percent of its PSSF grant directly to counties for the community provision of direct services and sets aside 15 percent of the total PSSF grant for State operated programs and administrative costs (no more than 10 percent of the total grant).

Each county selects programs for funding in accordance with its own needs assessment and conducts procurement activities in accordance with local administrative requirements. This occurs at least every three years, as counties are required to develop and submit PSSF plans to the CDSS for review and approval on three-year cycles, including annual PSSF updates. The CDSS provides technical assistance to the counties, addressing the need for consistency and coordination among the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), the county's System Improvement Plan (SIP) and the county's three-year PSSF plan. The CDSS reviews the three-year plans addressing the need for such consistency and coordination, prior to approving a county plan and authorizing its PSSF allocations.

Three Year Plans

California has required counties to develop plans for use of the PSSF funds on a three year cycle with annual updates based on federal fiscal year with the current cycle ending September 30, 2005. Accordingly, the CDSS has developed an instruction letter for the new three year cycle of October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2008. However, to best address the findings of the federal CFSR, the State's Program Improvement Plan, the county System Improvement Plans, the CWS System Improvement activities and the new Outcomes and Accountability System (AB 636), California is now requiring

counties to combine their PSSF plans with their Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT)/Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention plans. The cycle will start July 1, 2005, and extend through June 30, 2008. The resulting consolidated plan will provide a more complete picture of the continuum of needs and services within each county and facilitate blending and maximizing of funds.

The new three-year PSSF county plans are due to the CDSS by September 30, 2005. The CDSS' Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) has the oversight responsibility for the PSSF Program. As such, OCAP provides technical assistance to the counties. The technical assistance provided by OCAP stresses the need for consistency and coordination between the C-CFSR, CWS System Improvements and the consolidated three year plan.

Needs Assessments and Types of PSSF Services

Preventive services are determined by each county based on their own community needs assessment. Such assessments have identified a greater need for family preservation and support services in rural areas where isolation is a challenge to families needing preventive services. The needs assessments also show that the size of the population in these areas does not support a wide variety of adoption services.

On the other hand, these assessments show a greater parity among categories of services in the urban areas where a larger population base increases the need for, and provision of, family reunification, adoption and adoption support services.

As previously stated, it is the CDSS's intent to continue to have local community services funded by PSSF funds, follow PSSF program criteria in each of the four federal categories. Current examples of PSSF services provided by counties this year include but are not limited to the following:

- **Family Preservation**

Programs such as in-home services for at-risk children and their families; programs providing follow-up care to families where a child has been returned after a foster care placement including integrated case management and intensive home visiting; and strength-based parenting services designed to improve parenting skills by reinforcing parents' confidence in their strengths.

- **Family Support**

Health screenings and physical examinations including kindergarten health check-ups, nutrition education classes, family assessment and referral services, strength-based parenting and parent leadership services, individual and group counseling, mentoring, gang intervention, and other services designed to enhance student success (e.g. Kindergarten Boot Camp), and youth enrichment programs.

- **Time-Limited Family Reunification**

Individual, family, and group counseling; inpatient residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment; mental health; domestic violence; temporary child care; therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries; transportation to and/or from services; family assessment and referral services; case plan development; supervised and guided visitation services; father involvement services; in-home support; crisis intervention for children at risk of removal (emphasizing reunification when in the best interest of the children); and, aftercare services to reunifying families.

NOTE: Unless specifically tailored for reunifying families (e.g., aftercare, case plan development and supervised visitation specific to targeted reunifying families), these services are also available under the other three categories.

- **Adoption Promotion and Support Services**

Services include, but are not limited to, adoptive parent recruitment, including public service announcements; orientations for pre-adoptive families to prepare them for adoptive home studies; parenting skills; and, training programs for adoptive parents.

The attached CFS-101, PART II: Annual Summary of Child and Family Services chart includes specific data on the estimated number of individuals and/or families to be served and the estimated expenditures by fund source for the services.

Identified Gaps in PSSF Services

Gaps in PSSF services have been identified through county-submitted PSSF updates, the C-CFSR process, and the CDSS' consultation process. These sources have identified that not all services are accessible to families in all geographic regions of the State.

Various gaps exist in rural areas. Lack of readily accessible transportation can impede service. Limited availability of appropriate foster family homes makes it more difficult to access and provide time-limited family reunification services. Smaller populations make adoptive parent recruitment and provision of post-adoption services more challenging.

The CDSS county contacts also revealed gaps in culturally- appropriate services specifically for Native Americans. The OCAP staff noted the following additional service gaps in their review of county self assessments and SIPs, which affect the four PSSF categories:

- Supervised visitation resources for children
- Substance abuse treatment facilities for parents with young children

- Post-adoption services
- Respite care, and
- Affordable housing

Twenty percent minimum of PSSF funds is to be spent in each of the identified categories

Both the three year plan instruction letter and the annual update instruction letter to counties require that a strong rationale must be provided for each decision where a county is not meeting the specified 20 percent minimum.

Although counties make their local categorical decisions based on local needs, the OCAP will continue to instruct them on the 20 percent categorical spending requirement, monitor county expenditure data, and provide technical assistance, and administrative assistance necessary to correct any issues. The OCAP has started monitoring county expenditures quarterly to determine if additional technical assistance or development of a corrective action plan (CAP) is necessary for a county not meeting its goals as identified in the county three year plan and/or subsequent PSSF annual updates.

Each situation where there is a deficiency will be examined as to the reasonableness of meeting the goals on a county-specific basis. If there are reasons for not meeting each one of the goals, the specific county goals and the associated justifications will be documented. To ensure that the 20 percent goals are met on a statewide basis, the OCAP will also consider the information reported by each county when assessing the State's overall achievement.

The Impact of Los Angeles County on California's Percentage Deficiency

The primary issue with respect to the State's inability to achieve the 20 percent spending requirement were the previous PSSF expenditure patterns of Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County in past years had not used PSSF funds for its Time Limited Family Reunification or for Adoption Promotion and Support services. This is highly significant for the State, as Los Angeles County receives the largest PSSF county allocation.

In response to our concerns, Los Angeles County submitted a detailed corrective action plan (CAP) to the OCAP. Since then, the CDSS and Los Angeles County representatives have been in constant communication regarding their progress on the CAP. On March 25, 2005, the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) released a PSSF Request for Proposal (RFP) to bring the county into compliance by allocating a minimum of 20 percent of the County's total PSSF funding to each of the following service components: Family Support, Family Preservation, and Adoption Promotion and Support Services. In addition, the DCFS allocated 20 percent of the funding to provide Time-Limited Family Reunification services to eligible families by entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Health

Services to enhance the availability of timely alcohol and drug assessment and intensive treatment services for DCFS families in need of support to reunify with their children.

On June 14, 2005, the CDSS consultant met with the Los Angeles County representatives to review progress on the current PSSF process and to provide technical assistance to the three year plan development team. Los Angeles County had made much progress: the PSSF proposals had been reviewed, selections had been made, and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors had approved the selections. The contracts are in the process of being finalized, with services to begin by September 2005. The DCFS is actively working on their new three year plan, receiving community input as well as guidance from the CDSS as appropriate. The CDSS will continue to support Los Angeles County with focused technical assistance around claiming and coordination of services to ensure PSSF compliance.

The second quarter expenditure report, which was available late February 2005, was reviewed by the OCAP. As a result, OCAP staff contacted counties that were not demonstrating a minimum of 20 percent expenditure in each category and worked to bring them into compliance, or requested a strong rationale as to why compliance was not met, and requested information as to what other services and funds are being used to meet PSSF category requirements.

Expenditure data for the final quarters is not yet available; however, counties are moving toward compliance and are now developing their new three year plans assuring a 20 percent minimum expenditure in each category and writing their contracts accordingly. Since Los Angeles County is in the process of achieving compliance, the State is not yet at 20 percent for each category of service; however, with the progress made by Los Angeles in combination with the new county plans due in September 2005, the CDSS expects full compliance soon. It will take from two to four quarters after county claims are initially submitted to ascertain the level of compliance as counties are permitted to amend claims for quite a while after the end of the quarter.

PSSF Linkage to Other Family Support and Family Preservation Services

The OCAP will continue working with counties to identify linkages with existing family support and family preservation services. The OCAP annually distributes a formal request by either an All County Letter (ACL) or an All County Information Notice (ACIN) sent to the counties that includes a request for information on linkages with other programs. Of particular interest to the OCAP is information that identifies county PSSF efforts linked to the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) cash assistance program, and other programs such as substance abuse, child abuse prevention, early intervention services, mental health, local corrections, and work force development.

Blending of funds

The OCAP encourages counties to maximize services through linking to other fund sources.

As a rule, counties blend funds from available sources that include the following programs: PSSF, Child Abuse Treatment Act (CAPTA), Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), the California Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT) Program, the Children's Trust Fund, foundations and private donations. The intent is to maximize services by providing a continuum of services for children and families from all serving agencies.

DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE

PSSF funds will be used to develop and expand family support and family preservation services.

PSSF funds will continue to be used to broaden the network of services that counties have available to serve families without having to open a case in the CWS system. These services are essential for the early intervention intake system within a Differential Response framework. They will allow CWS to respond earlier, with greater flexibility, and with customized services and support for families ensuring child safety and reducing or eliminating re-entry into the CWS system.

Differential Response is a new intake system which allows the child welfare agency to respond in an individualized manner to referrals based on the unique needs, resources and circumstances of the family. It is designed to engage the participation of vulnerable families and children currently not receiving services designed to improve the life skills of parents.

Developing and expanding current family support and family preservation services is essential to implementation of a Differential Response system. During State fiscal year 2004-2005, three workgroups, comprised of representatives from the CDSS and the 11 pilot counties implementing the CWS System Improvements (which includes Differential Response), developed guidelines and protocols to support local implementation of: 1) structures that are necessary for communities to build capacity, develop resources and strengthen partnerships to create an array of quality services; and 2) intake and assessment processes for counties to respond to the needs of children and families, including connecting families to community resources.

During State fiscal year 2004-2005 the plan called for Los Angeles County and 10 other counties to begin implementing Differential Response in targeted communities. These 11 pilot counties, supported by the Breakthrough Series Collaborative, have developed specific implementation plans for their counties, have begun testing strategies in

targeted areas, and have begun implementation of a Differential Response approach in those targeted areas.

Expanded Family Support and Family Preservation Services Connect To Existing Preventive Services

Some communities have gaps in services so that families are not able to obtain the appropriate services when they need them. As a result, circumstances in the family often deteriorate to the point that CWS must become involved and perhaps remove children from their homes. By expanding on these services in a carefully planned manner so that they are integrated with existing services, a complete spectrum of core services may become available.

Differential Response redefines the relationship between the child welfare agency and existing and new community providers as partners in protecting children. The goal is that PSSF funds will be used to build this network of services through the partnership between CWS and community providers.

The overall goal of Differential Response is to provide support and preservation services to families before they become formally involved with the CWS agency. This process involves an active partnership with community based organizations, as well as other county service agencies.

Funds were budgeted for State fiscal year 2004-2005 to support the following activities related to the CWS System Improvements, including Differential Response: 1) guideline development; 2) implementation planning; 3) development of community resources; 4) staff and community partner training and 5) implementation. Funds are also included for these activities in the 2005-2006 budget.

Differential Response Linkage to Other Services and the Child and Family Services

Within California, the Differential Response strategy creates a new early intervention intake system in which the child welfare agency responds in a more flexible manner (with three response paths rather than one) to referrals of child abuse or neglect based on the perceived safety and risk factors present in the family. Services are provided based on the family's needs, resources and circumstances.

Path One assumes there will be no further involvement of CWS in the case unless the circumstances prove to be different than what was known at intake. These cases would be typically low or no risk of child abuse and neglect, but it is clear the family is experiencing problems or stressors, which could be addressed by community services. Through this path community agencies expand CWS ability to have someone respond, see the child is safe, preserve the family and provide support/services to families.

Path Two is for families that present with moderate risks of child abuse and neglect. Safety factors may not be immediately manifested in all cases, but risk is present. CWS will conduct an in-person contact (this contact may include a community partner); CWS assesses to determine the service path. Services may be provided through CWS

and/or partnership with community organizations to ensure that families are receiving services and support based upon their needs.

Path Three is for families that present with higher risk and/or safety concerns. These cases require a more immediate response to ensure child safety. CWS and law enforcement (where necessary), will be the key responders for this path. Through the support of county interagency partners and community service providers, services and support will be enhanced to ensure child safety within the home or in out-of-home care.

The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) and CWS System Improvements

During the past year, the 11 pilot counties began to use a Differential Response framework in targeted communities within their respective counties. BSC provides training and technical assistance to these counties (and 31 other counties) regarding the implementation of this new system. Some PSSF funds were used to fund the BSC.

As a result of the BSC trainings, counties learned how to effectively and efficiently study, test, evaluate and implement child welfare service practice changes. Learning sessions were held in which the counties gathered together for face-to-face learning, strategizing and networking. These sessions were led by national experts as faculty who mentor the participating county teams. Counties have been focusing on the following subjects:

- The intake structure as three pathways of service response; and
- A standardized approach to assessment of safety, risk, protective capacity and needs.

Based on county input, at the end of the first year of this three year contract, the CDSS worked with the contractor to make important adjustments beginning in the second year to the training and TA activities being provided to the counties. There were an increased number of training sessions which were held regionally. These were full-day sessions and were targeted to the specific training needs for implementation of Differential Response.

The time period in between the Learning Sessions is called the Action Period. During this time the counties have been conducting Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycles to test and evaluate a series of small-scale changes with the goal of more rapidly bringing about a larger scale change in a particular area. During these Action Periods, the counties have had a series of collaborative conference calls to report their progress, receive technical assistance regarding their work and get feedback and insights from other counties. A change in the second year of the contract is that these calls are now oriented around specific topic areas, such as Assessment, Partnering, Engagement and other topics pertinent to the implementation of Differential Response.

To assist counties in shared learning, the BSC developed an extranet message board on which counties post implementation objectives and outcomes, and share information

on lessons learned in the process. The Extranet was enhanced to make it more user-friendly and useful as a method for the counties to learn both from each other and from the input of the faculty related to specific topic areas.

In addition, the training addressed a planning and evaluation component. Counties provide BSC with structured monthly reports on their progress and collect data to monitor and evaluate outcomes. To make sure counties are consistent in their approach to practice change, the training cross-referenced BSC with the Self Assessment and System Improvement Plan as delineated in the C-CFSR. There are a total of 43 counties represented within the three groups who received the training.

Implementing a Differential Response intake structure will result in stronger partnerships among public and private sector agencies. This new approach will better provide services for at-risk families and children in the areas of referrals for services covering physical and/or mental health, educational, substance abuse and parent training services. The CDSS is utilizing the experience of the 11 pilot counties involved in the Differential Response intake system to develop community resource strategies to guide future direction in the intake area.

CAPTA funds Integration and Coordination with Child and Family Services

CAPTA funds are used to strengthen child abuse prevention services and support various demonstration projects that implement best practices for integration with the local child and family services continuum. The emphasis is on child abuse prevention services, including family preservation and support. For example, CAPTA funds are used to provide training and technical assistance that focus on Family Resource Centers (FRCs) and the wide variety of child and family services they provide; the development and support of Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) in selected counties; by providing stipends to parents and foster parents so that they can attend Statewide CRP meetings; and the development and implementation of the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) Study as a promising practice.

This year the SFI Study began testing a particular family-based intervention that is designed to enhance the positive involvement of fathers with their children and to enhance the organizational culture of FRCs to be more inclusive of fathers. In addition to the outcomes of the intervention, it is anticipated that the study will increase parent engagement into FRC services due to increased outreach and training and technical assistance for staff on skills related to community engagement, retention of families, and expertise in referral strategies.

Small County Initiative II (SCI II)

Building upon the successes of the initial Small County Initiative, SCI II focuses on the unique needs of small counties (defined here as those with populations of 70,000 or less) and supports expanding and strengthening the existing county prevention infrastructure and capacity to deliver services to small rural communities. The initiative

provides additional funding and resources and also provides another link to local public and private prevention and family support activities.

Eleven counties* were selected to participate in the initiative through a competitive process. These counties include: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Del Norte, Glenn, Plumas, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne and Yuba. The selection process was based on how well the county identified and submitted a plan and budget to meet its needs in accordance with the established guidelines.

The implementation period for SCI II is January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2006, due to changes in State administration and processes around the grant/contract process, as well as delays in release of funding and start-up at the county level, and the degree of implementation varies from county to county. Program funding is a combination of Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP).

** Not to be confused with the 11 pilot counties implementing the CWS System Improvements.*

CONCLUSION

The State continues to take a strong approach toward PSSF program improvement. It is expected that quarterly fiscal expenditure monitoring, CAPTA assistance, the new intake structure referred to as Differential Response, the SCI II assistance to selected counties, the CDSS technical assistance, and reviews of the consolidated three year county plans and related annual updates, along with the focus on interagency and community partnerships will all strengthen the PSSF Program. In addition, this approach is expected to strengthen existing linkages with other services and establish new ones where currently there are gaps. The State remains committed to achieving and maintaining compliance with all PSSF Program requirements.

Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project

Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project Update

Summary

The 1997 five-year Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project was approved for a 12 county project to evaluate cost neutrality for Wraparound and Family Group Conferencing programs as an alternative for children who would otherwise be placed in high level group homes or foster care. The project was implemented in 1998. Seven counties participated: Alameda, Humboldt, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, Riverside, Fresno, and Los Angeles. Although California's five-year project period ended in September 2003, an extension was granted until July 2005 for five counties providing Wraparound services while the State considered whether to request a longer extension or in the event a new flexible funding demonstration is approved, integrate the wraparound services intervention into the new waiver demonstration project.

However, only San Luis Obispo and Sacramento have chosen to continue through the extension period. The CDSS agreed to several conditions during the extension period: 1) counties will no longer enroll new participants in the current waiver demonstration (Wraparound services) until such time as a decision has been made about the future of the demonstration project; 2) while the State no longer has an independent evaluation contract in place, additional evaluation information will be collected by counties and will be reported to DHHS in ongoing progress reports and 3) the State will work with counties to carefully monitor cost neutrality.

Specific Accomplishments/Progress

The final evaluation report was completed by the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) in September 2004. However, there were some significant child welfare outcome findings in specific counties that were implementing Wraparound as an intervention: (a) a larger proportion of children in Alameda County receiving Wraparound were living in family-based environments at the end of the study, and (b) a smaller proportion of children in Sacramento County receiving Wraparound exited from the child welfare system due to incarceration. Additionally, in Alameda County, where assessments of child well-being were conducted, youth respondents reported improved health status and both youth and caregivers reported improved youth emotional/behavioral adjustment. Caregiver respondents reported improved satisfaction with services. In the Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Process Study, the evaluation noted the ability of FGDM to facilitate collaborative relationships with families experiencing intractable problems, and entering a highly adversarial child welfare system. This positive relationship with those who are crucial in making decisions about children is the first step towards improving outcomes. In this regard the Waiver made an important contribution to participating counties' treatment group participants.

The State continues to operate a Wraparound program using State foster care funds, but do so without Title IV-E funding. No Statewide evaluation currently exists; however, each county is responsible for the ongoing evaluation of their Wraparound program.

The final evaluation can be reviewed on the UCB website at:
<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/childwelfare/researchdetails.asp?name=waiver>

The CDSS is in the process of negotiating a second waiver with the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). This waiver and demonstration project will allow up to 20 counties to receive a block grant-type allocation and to test whether the increased flexibility of federal funds translates into better safety, permanence and well being outcomes.

Indian Child Welfare Act

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT (ICWA)

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) continues to work with the 107 federally recognized California tribes, as well as the approximately 40 tribes that are not currently recognized. The activities/projects discussed below describe the measures that the CDSS continues to take to ensure compliance with the Act.

Specific Accomplishments/Progress

Child and Family Services Division ICWA Workgroup

The ICWA Workgroup was formed in July 2002. It continues to expand its membership and now consists of over 30 tribal ICWA workers/advocates, 10 county child welfare and probation representatives and 10 CDSS staff.

The ICWA Workgroup continued to meet bi-monthly to identify ICWA issues/problems that exist and develop recommendations and solutions for tribes, counties and the State. Several accomplishments of the Workgroup this year are:

- Developed the CDSS ICWA training curriculum specifically designed for probation officers.
- Assisted the Judicial Council of California in the development of a new mandatory court form (JV-135) for ICWA noticing purposes.
- Participated with the General Accounting Office in the recent national study regarding the implementation of ICWA.

Tribal/State Agreements

The CDSS continues negotiations of a Tribal/State agreement with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. Issues that were once barriers to completion of an agreement with the Tribe have been eliminated. The most recent version of the agreement has been presented to the Tribe for their review. The CDSS is awaiting response from the Tribe.

In May 2005, the Karuk Tribe of California began negotiations with the CDSS on a Title IV-E agreement. While several items of disagreement still remain, negotiations on the Karuk agreement have gone much more expeditiously than the Washoe Tribe agreement. It appears at this time as though the Karuk agreement will be executed first, should the Karuk Tribal Council decide to invest its own funds to make up the share of cost normally assigned to county government.

As questions come up with regard to funding issues, we will need to seek technical assistance from Region IX to facilitate these agreements. In addition, to assist tribes in developing social services plans, we may be seeking training and technical assistance from an NRC.

ICWA Training Projects/Conferences

Capacity Building for Tribal Constituents Project:

This year, the focus of this project has been on modifying the CDSS' existing ICWA training curriculum to better assist juvenile probation placement officers in implementing ICWA requirements. Five statewide regional trainings focusing on probation and the delinquency process were conducted this fiscal year. Two additional ICWA trainings focusing on the dependency system and how county child welfare staff can fully implement ICWA were also conducted. The curriculum that was developed as part of the project continues to be utilized by Regional Training Academies (RTAs) when conducting ICWA training for county child welfare staff. The RTAs are using tribal representatives/advocates that are familiar with this curriculum as co-trainers. The CDSS plans to continue this project into future years.

Annual ICWA Conference

The Annual Statewide ICWA Conference was held June 28-30, 2005. This conference provides training regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Over 125 participants attended the conference including tribal ICWA workers; tribal advocates, tribal council members and community leaders; law enforcement; child welfare and probation staff; judges; attorneys; foster/adoption agencies; social services agency personnel; and other interested parties. The mission of the conference is to support positive partnerships between tribes and federal, state and local governments for the benefit of all Indian children.

Additional training activities this year:

Training of Trainers for ICWA curriculum, January 20, 2005; 25 participants from six counties, 13 tribes/tribal organizations, and four training organizations

General ICWA Training, February 9, 2005; 69 participants from 10 counties and five tribes/tribal organizations

General ICWA Training, April 7, 2005; 27 participants from eight counties and eight tribes/tribal organizations

Probation Focused ICWA Training, April 12, 2005; 114 participants from 23 counties and 10 tribes/tribal organizations

Probation Focused ICWA Training, May 18, 2005; 40 participants from 12 counties and four tribes/tribal organizations

Probation Focused ICWA Training, May 25, 2005; 48 participants from 6 counties and four tribes/tribal organizations

Probation Focused ICWA Training, June 15, 2005; 118 participants from three counties

Probation Focused ICWA Training, June 16, 2005; 24 participants from three counties and three tribes/tribal organizations

Coordination with Tribes Regarding the Section 422 Protections for Children

Congress enacted Public Law (PL) 280 in 1953, which required several states, including California, to assume criminal and some civil jurisdiction over all or part of Indian country within these states. PL 280 did not eliminate tribal jurisdiction. Although states were delegated criminal and civil jurisdiction, that jurisdiction remained concurrent with some aspects of inherent tribal jurisdiction. However, not all tribes have developed courts and so not all tribes exercise their jurisdiction.

There are very few Indian children in California under tribal jurisdiction, as only a small number of tribes have tribal courts and social services departments that could provide necessary services, partly due to the size of the tribes and the lack of adequate funding to the tribes for these services. For those tribes that do take jurisdiction, most often the initial contact regarding a family is made to the local child welfare agency who then contacts the tribe to allow them to take jurisdiction.

Many tribes and county child welfare agencies have developed protocols whereby they work together to provide child welfare services. A number of counties and tribes have convened ICWA roundtables/working groups which meet on a regular basis to discuss issues relative to the provision of child welfare services and how to better protect children. Some counties contact the tribal social services worker when an emergency response call is received allowing for both parties to respond to the family. Some tribes have services that can be provided early in the case to allow for the children and families to remain together.

The CDSS utilizes its ICWA Workgroup, which is currently comprised of over 30 representatives from tribes and tribal organizations as well as representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, counties and the State, as a means of consulting with tribes. The tribal members of the Workgroup were chosen by the California tribes as their representatives to the CDSS. The Workgroup meets bi-monthly to discuss ICWA issues and make recommendations on how to ensure implementation of the Act. Consultation with the Workgroup also occurs via electronic mail.

Barriers/Unexpected Events

Implementation of the ICWA Full Compliance Project was delayed because the contractor had some difficulty in hiring qualified individuals to fill the positions of the Project. The positions were filled, and ICWA symposiums were held in Garden Grove on June 2, 2005, and in San Francisco on July 6, 2005.

Foster Care/Adoption Recruitment Plan

FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION RECRUITMENT PLAN

The CDSS' Role in the Family to Family Initiative

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) continues to contribute substantial resources to support the implementation of Family to Family in counties whose CWS caseload combined comprise 85 percent of the caseload statewide.

The following is a report on the progress of Phase II and Phase III Family to Family counties in recruitment, training and support of resource families.

Currently, there are 24 counties involved in Family to Family. All counties are utilizing the Family to Family recruitment strategy as well as the other core strategies.

Specific accomplishments/progress

Alameda County: The Recruitment Training and Support (RTS) workgroup focused much of the year on rebuilding relationships with and retention of current resource families. As these relationships continue to grow stronger, the workgroup planned recruitment and awareness activities. For instance, the group sponsored a Recruitment and Support Resource Expo on August 19, 2004 at Tennyson High School. The workgroup also participated in the following events to recruit resource families and disseminate Family to Family information: Black Expo on August 1, 2004; Hayward Zucchini Festival on August 21, 2004; and Solano Stroll on September 12, 2004. The RTS workgroup members write and/or contribute to a foster parent column: "Foster Parent's Corner" which is included in the Department's Family to Family quarterly newsletter. The workgroup has completed an analysis of the PRIDE resource parent pre-service training curriculum and made a recommendation, which was approved by Alameda County DSS senior management, to replace its current training curriculum with PRIDE.

In addition, at the beginning of the county's Family to Family planning effort, the county had a backlog of over 800 cases requiring finalization in its Adoptions program. This past fiscal year, they successfully eliminated the entire backlog of pending finalizations, and finalized an additional 310 adoptions. Their most recent Adoption Day, held in November 2004, was a successful community collaboration with members of the Board of Supervisors, Juvenile Court Bench Officers, Adoption Agencies and attorneys participating in the celebration.

For the period of January 2005 - June 2005, Alameda County has engaged in the following activities:

- Development of a strategic recruitment plan, which includes a faith-based engagement strategy (focused on older youth and youth in group homes);
- Continued development of resource family support strategies;
- Implementation of PRIDE model foster parent training;

- Included resource family recognition efforts with regularly scheduled (bi-monthly, quarterly, or semi annual) recognition events and activities;
- Expanded in-service/continuing training curriculum

Santa Barbara County: Santa Barbara County Child Welfare Services is engaged in several on-going activities that have enhanced their visibility in the community. Their message is to invite the communities and the people of Santa Barbara County to be partners with them in strengthening families and children.

Three of their most successful recruitment, training and support strategies have been:

1. Establishing Foster Parent mentors in each region
2. Contracting with an assessment expert who conducts comprehensive social family assessments on all potential Foster Parents
3. Reinvigorating the Foster Parent Association with a president who has joined in our efforts to retain, support, and train Foster Parents.

In addition, the county has allotted CWS dollars into specialized areas that support Foster Parent retention, recruitment, and training. Each region has one social worker that specializes in licensing, relative approvals, and orientation training. Administrative and program supports have also had resources added. They are currently exploring allocating a supervisor position dedicated to this area.

Since September 2003, they have licensed 23 new foster homes: 11 homes in the Santa Maria region, seven in the Lompoc region and five in the Santa Barbara region.

The County has approved 69 relative/non-related extended family member homes: 27 homes in the Santa Maria region, 20 in the Lompoc region, 20 in the Santa Barbara region, and 2 out-of-county. Approximately 35 percent of total child placements are with relatives. Although the County did not reach the 40 percent stated objective, they believe they were successful.

California's relative approval process has created barriers in initially placing children with relatives. Even though the relative approval process is geared toward good social work practice and the best interest of children, it still presents challenges and delays in the initial placement with kin. However, even with these challenges, Santa Barbara County places 35 percent of children with kin. They are confident that this number will continue to increase as the barriers in this process are minimized.

Contra Costa County: Contra Costa County has developed a small base of resource homes in the designated phase-in areas. They have 39 fully licensed Family to Family resource homes in the phase-in areas. There have been some issues around licensing standards such as size and occupancy in the home, prior legal difficulties, language and cultural barriers. They have experimented with different recruitment strategies such as contracting with foster parents, hiring community Engagement Specialists to work with their community partnership endeavor as well as to recruit resource homes. There are

also monthly support groups for Family to Family resource homes. Contra Costa County considers all staff to be recruiters. The three Community Engagement Specialists attend the monthly Recruitment Training and Support workgroup (RTS) meeting to coordinate recruitment activities, community events and outreach activities. A strategic plan is being developed to outline recruitment strategies, outcomes and barriers.

In 2004, 407 potential applicants attended the countywide orientations, which are offered three times a month. Of these, 145 were in the phase-in areas. Follow-up contact has been initiated to inquire if these potential applicants are still interested or need assistance with the process/paperwork. A follow-up orientation will be scheduled for those applicants who continue to express an interest. In addition, these potential applicants now receive the Foster Family Newsletter outlining training, information on the continued need for foster homes for children in their communities, and to offer any assistance needed to become a licensed foster parent.

A comprehensive review of all county licensed foster homes was completed in December 2004 by home finding staff. Twenty homes already licensed were identified in the phase-in area. To further engage them in the County's Family to Family efforts, an informational letter was sent encouraging them to join the county's efforts.

Three staff participated in the January Family to Family conference in Sacramento "The Marriage of PRIDE and Family To Family". The PRIDE materials, which strongly incorporate Family to Family into the curriculum, are being ordered through the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA). While the Family to Family philosophy has been an integral part of PRIDE for the past two years, the county is seeking to strengthen the concept and implementation of resource homes in their orientation of new applicants. They will be working to develop training for trainers through the County's Staff Development Department to increase the number of staff both trained in the curriculum and to be trainers through the local colleges. This will also strengthen the integration of Family to Family into the districts as staff embrace the Family to Family philosophy and understand the need to place children in their communities.

The county meets quarterly with the three community colleges and is building on their curriculum of working with birth parents, importance of visitation, community-based placements/services and keeping the focus on the child when considering out-of-home placement and/or reunification.

San Francisco County: Since implementing Family to Family, the County has been focusing more on targeted recruitment. Initially this was based on neighborhoods in the city in which the majority of removals of children from their homes occur. Data regarding removals was analyzed, and from that targeted neighborhoods were identified. Gradually, the County has also started targeting homes for teens, for children who are monolingual Spanish-speaking, and for Cantonese-speaking children. In the past year the County has been able to license some additional new homes for teens, and currently have approximately 11 families in a Spanish speaking pre-service training.

Of note in San Francisco County is the issue of mass recruitment. The county has virtually eliminated their newspaper and radio advertising, and has not experienced any significant drop in calls. They have also stopped having recruitment booths at large events/fairs and have focused on the smaller community based events in the targeted neighborhoods.

The county reports they still have a way to go with engaging the community, but they do have a core group of foster parents from the targeted communities that attend the bi-weekly Recruitment Training and Support (RTS) workgroup meetings. They have instituted a series of bi-monthly “brown bag” meetings to discuss licensing issues, and the DHS administration has set up monthly meetings with the board members of the foster parent organization.

A joint “Bridging Professional Cultures” training was conducted with child welfare workers and foster parents. The County plans to expand such trainings so that every foster parent and every child welfare worker has a chance to attend.

Currently, the county’s licensing unit is working on a plan to provide an automatic in-person response to foster homes when a new home receives its first placement. This would be to ensure the foster parent has all the resources and support needed before any problems arise. This effort will be in conjunction with an in-person or phone response from a volunteer foster parent mentor.

While the Licensing Unit has been making strides in this area, the agency as a whole has significant room for improvement. There are long standing issues of agency culture regarding attitudes towards foster parents that need to be addressed. This will take time, creativity, and patience to move forward.

The Recruitment Training and Support accomplishments in 2004 include the following:

- Finalized recruitment and action plan. Revised and ordered recruitment materials. Set specific goals for the recruitment of Spanish-speaking, Cantonese-speaking, and homes for teens.
- Integrated birth parents into the pre-service training.
- Held ongoing meetings with the Latino foster parent support group and the Spanish-speaking child welfare units at 3120 Mission Street.
- Met with the teen units and Independent Living Skills staff to discuss strategies for recruiting more homes for teens.
- Held pilot “Bridging Professional Cultures” training with foster parents and child welfare workers. Currently analyzing feedback and setting up meetings to revise curriculum.
- Recruiters and unit supervisor have made initial contacts with the Mayor’s Chief of Staff and the Police Chief regarding getting their support for recruitment.
- Recruiters and the unit supervisor have participated in such community events as the Mayor’s March Gladness Basketball Tournament in Bayview Hunters Point and the Asian Pacific Islander Family Resource Network’s Resource Faire/Celebration.

- Began monthly “brown bag” meetings with foster parents which focus on licensing regulations/policies.
- Held annual Foster Parent Appreciation Banquet at Palace Hotel. Mayor Newsome and Supervisor Maxwell were in attendance.
- Continued to recognize special days in the lives of foster parents.
- Continued to conduct foster parent orientations in community based settings.
- Chose a foster parent to be co-chair of the RTS work group and continued to hold biweekly meetings of the RTS work group.

San Mateo County: The Human Services Agency (HSA) in San Mateo County continues to focus on maintaining and recruiting resource parents and involving community partners in these efforts. The HSA’s Homefinding Unit, in partnership with Kinship Support Services, and other community stakeholders, has been instrumental in recruitment and training efforts throughout the county. Recruitment efforts have run the gamut from advertising at local movie theatres and public transportation buses to attending PTAs and holding “brown bags” at local hospitals, always in partnership with a foster parent.

According to their county plan, by June 2005, recruitment efforts in the county aim to increase the number of new resource family home beds by 50. This goal can be realized by licensing 25 new foster homes. The HSA will also focus on recruiting homes for pre-adolescents and adolescents that can support their unique social, emotional, and educational needs. Former foster youth and youth-focused marketing materials will be employed in recruitment efforts. Moreover, HSA is restructuring its services for adolescents. Social workers who work with adolescents and the Long Term Care Unit will come together under one unit, and an analysis of the effectiveness and usage of the Wraparound Program and Wraparound strategies will recommend areas for improvement. Another adolescent-related goal is to support lifelong adult connections. The county will continue to contract with the College of San Mateo, which uses a curriculum geared toward improving communication between resource parents and HSA staff to increase placement stability and decrease re-entry into shelter care. In addition, permanence concepts, such as youth-driven strategies that sustain lifelong connections, will be woven into the curriculum.

Strengthening supports for resource families remains a focus area in the County. The HSA continues to partner with the Foster Parent Association (FPA) to advance the development of the mentoring program to assist foster and adoptive parents. Licensed foster parent families may also access the Foster Parent Association and the Foster Parent Support Group for assistance and advocacy.

According to the County’s self improvement plan (SIP), various resources are being revised or developed for foster parents. For example, the FPA, HSA staff, and a contractor are revising the *Foster Parent Handbook* and are developing the first edition of the *Foster Parent Bill of Rights*. Moreover, HSA will distribute a guidebook on how to navigate the child welfare system, court, probation, mental health, and related community service networks, and provide on-line access to policies and protocols.

Formal hiring of the Foster Parent Liaison position will solidify the county's commitment to providing foster parents with an outlet to address concerns and questions. This position will be hired by the Foster Parent Association, Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center, or another non-profit selected by the FPA; HSA will fund this position. Finally, the county aims to strengthen the relationship between resource parents and social workers. In partnership with the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center, quarterly conferences to facilitate conversation between these groups are organized to continue building a shared understanding and mutual respect for roles and expectations. Resource parents continue to receive technical assistance from HSA to meet licensing requirements, and to be invited to outreach sessions that inform of services and resources.

San Luis Obispo County: Since January 2004, San Luis Obispo (SLO) County:

- Has developed, established and trained staff, resource parents on policy and procedure regarding "All Nations Against Resource Parents", which standardizes the agency process for reporting incidents of alleged abuse/neglect in out-of-home care;
- Is utilizing of a variety of resource family recruitment, training and support efforts including recent targeted recruitment at schools, faith-based organizations, and service clubs;
- Continues to meet regularly with the local Foster Parent Association (FPA) The FPA President is co-located on the county's Department of Social Services site;
- Has targeted neighborhoods in the North and South county regions where data analysis reflects the need;
- Has created a Children's Binder, which contains pictures and unique information of every child who is currently in our foster care system;
- Has developed Spanish recruitment materials that will reach at least three new groups in the Spanish-speaking communities;
- Is utilizing the PRIDE/Family to Family curriculum through our local community college, which includes training by birth parents, resource parents, foster and adopted youth;
- Provides STAP (Specialized Therapeutic Adoption Program) training for mentoring resource parents.
- Continues to significantly increase the recruitment and approval of Relative/Non-relative Extended Family Member (NREFM) homes thus positively impacting several Family to Family outcomes such as kinship placements, placements closer to home, etc.

Stanislaus County: Stanislaus County has focused on building community partnerships to increase neighborhood based foster care. The County has targeted West Modesto as they have the highest removal rates in the County. In addition to their normally scheduled PRIDE/Family to Family trainings, one Foster Parent Orientation and one PRIDE/Family to Family training were held in a West Modesto church. Stanislaus County has targeted homes for sibling groups and teens. One of the exciting

additions to the PRIDE/Family to Family trainings is a teen panel made up of current/past foster youth who share with prospective foster parents what an “average foster youth” needs, and hopefully will dismiss some myths about foster youth. An Activity Planning Committee has been developed to coordinate events that promote relationships between social workers and resource parents as well. Some of the activities include a kite derby, an Easter Egg Hunt quarterly Coffee Connections, and End of Summer Carnival and a Boo Bash for Halloween.

According to their county plan, by the end of June, Stanislaus County will increase its recruiting and training efforts in four more communities.

Santa Clara County: The Resource Family Support workgroup has helped shift recruitment efforts from internal and centralized to community-based and regional. The Resource Family Support Team was developed to provide additional support for the county’s licensed resource home providers. Santa Clara has 8 full time contracted resource family advocates who cover all 450 resource families throughout all regions in the county. Their primary emphasis is on resource families currently providing care for children. Families are matched with advocates based on ethnicity, language, culture and geographical region. The team is comprised of contract staff (former or current foster parents). Each resource home advocate is assigned to a specific family and is available to respond on call in the event of an emergency or crisis. Resource Family Advocates also participate in Team Decision-Making meetings whenever a placement change may occur. Santa Clara County also has a Foster/Adoptive Parent Resource Center.

One of Santa Clara County’s biggest successes is the reduction of the County’s children’s shelter population, where the children’s population has consistently stayed below 30 children. Renamed the Children’s Center, its primary function is now an intake and assessment center for less than 24 hours. Additionally, alternative uses for the Center have been developed in the areas of educational and mental health support for children in care and their resource families. The Center provides general in-service trainings for resource families.

Monthly meetings are held as a forum for resource parents to express concerns/issues with DCFS. The foster parent association president is also a member of the Family to Family implementation team. Data has shown a higher proportion of children are placed with relatives (957 out of 2,007 total children placed in out-of-home care), increasing the chances of achieving permanence. As part of the new DCFS redesign, a Relative Finding unit has been established to further enhance this process. Santa Clara County uses the PRIDE/Family to Family curriculum and involves both birth parents and former foster youth. The county has also recruited 187 new resource families through the five community action teams.

Los Angeles County: In March 2004, the Permanency Resources Division was established. One of the primary goals was to consolidate the recruitment of foster and adoptive parent(s); orientations; and pre-service training; and the home study process for any family approved for out-of-home care. For the first time in the history of foster

care and adoption in Los Angeles County, the process was consolidated to enhance concurrent planning and ensure timely permanence for children.

In July 2004, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the National Foster Parent Association (NFPA), the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Family to Family staff, along with the recruitment, training and support stakeholders in the community, began the development of a long-range plan that would maximize the placement resources for children requiring out-of-home care. This collaboration became known as the Recruitment Partnership Forum. Planning included improvements in gathering and analyzing recruitment related data on existing placement resources, development of new recruitment strategies, and increased utilization of resources or strategies that have been successful in facilitating permanency.

The Recruitment Partnership Forum that included a comprehensive list of internal, as well as external, stakeholders of Los Angeles County met in August 2004, December 2004 and March 2005 to share information; to define present and future goals and objectives; and to determine the integration and implementation of the recruitment plan.

The ultimate goal of the long-range recruitment plan is to increase the number of resource families (foster and/or adoptive homes) to meet the specific needs of children and youth in care; and to develop a network of resource families that is neighborhood-based, culturally sensitive and located primarily in the communities where the children live. There were five workgroups established to address recruitment issues for the following target populations: Adoption (Child-Specific), Cultural-Religion-Language, Medically Fragile, Siblings and Teens.

GENERAL RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

Family Builders by Adoption (California Kids Connection) Program

The Family Builders by Adoption Program is the California on-line adoption exchange registry of (1) children whose placement plan is adoption and (2) qualified families approved for adoption by public and private agencies. An adoption exchange is an organized means of sharing information about available children and searching families. The exchange also facilitates permanence on a local, regional, statewide and nationwide level for California's children. Services include an internet registry site, a photo listing book, exchange meetings, matching events and training and education for caseworkers. In addition, Family Builders is the California Resource and Recruitment Team for the National Adopt US Kids Campaign. The contractor provides the CDSS with monthly data reports. These reports reflect cumulative totals of children who are registered, successful matches, adopted, ethnicity, legal status, and training provided, to name a few of the statistical categories of data currently being captured. Data specific to queries not currently listed on the reports may be extrapolated upon request. For State fiscal year 2004, there were an average of 450 children listed in a given month and a total of 2,712 numbers of inquiries from qualified and approved families. Currently, 26 public agencies (46 percent of all public agencies) participate in exchange meetings and list children on the exchange. We have 25 private agencies listing

families on the exchange site. This represents 61 percent of the licensed agencies who offer foster-adopt services.

Foster Care Initiative (Assembly Bill 2129)

Chapter 1080, Statutes of 1993 (Assembly Bill 2129) made funds available in the annual Governor's Budget county allocations through the CDSS to support county recruitment efforts. The counties are required to submit a year-end report outlining their recruitment, training and retention program data and accomplishments achieved during the fiscal year regardless if the activities are funded by Assembly Bill 2129 funds, county funds, grants, contributions, or other funding streams. This data is compiled into a comprehensive report for statewide distribution, via the internet (see below) that can be used by the State and counties in planning future activities. This report is called the Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Report for 2005. The community colleges, counties and foster parent associations collaborate to complete the report.

The report indicated many positive results, including a four percent decrease in caseload from the previous year of the same time period and at the same time displaying an increase in the number of bilingual staff as a result of the cultural diversity of children entering the child welfare system. Additionally, the report corroborated a long assumed belief that the most effective recruitment sources and materials utilized were other resource families/friends and newspaper advertisements. The categories of children for which counties conducted specialized recruitment of potential resource families were adolescents, youths, infants born substance abuse exposed, and sibling sets. The categories of children most difficult to recruit for or place with resource families were adolescents with psychological or mental disabilities, youths with psychological or mental disabilities, and adolescents/youths with substance abuse. The report further strengthened the resolve that enhanced recruitment, training and retention must continue in order to allow California's children in out-of-home placement an opportunity to live in safe, stable and permanent homes.

The report can be accessed on the CDSS' Children and Families Services Division website at <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov>, under "Foster Care Reports" or the California Family to Family website, <http://www.f2f.ca.gov>, under the "What's New" section.

Toll-Free Hotline

Some recruitment is done through the toll-free hotline. The hotline receives approximately 500 calls a month regarding Adoption and Foster Care. When a call comes in with a question regarding the Adoption or Foster Care process, the staff will answer the question if they know the answer. If not, the call will be directed to the welfare department in the county where the caller resides. Fifty-five percent of the calls come from Los Angeles, Sacramento and Orange counties. Calls are also received from Nevada and Arizona.

Perinatal Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program (formerly known as Options for Recovery)

Currently, there are 10 counties participating in the Perinatal Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program. Recruitment efforts counties have undertaken related to the Program include: San Diego County has recently included a recruitment flyer in the information packet distributed at the Foster Home Licensing Orientations throughout the County. They are developing a website to provide visibility for their program and user-friendly information to recruit more parents. Recently, Shasta County launched a large recruitment campaign. They have monthly support groups and an strong networking system that provides positive reinforcement of their program as well as word-of-mouth recruitment.

Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP)

Some examples of county recruitment efforts related to STAP include: Monterey County utilizes peer recruiters to attend various events to talk to members of the community about becoming adoptive parents to substance exposed or HIV positive children. In the past year, 15 families were recruited in this manner; San Luis Obispo County obtains their STAP parents from their general recruitment pool; Shasta County blends their recruitment funds and utilizes public radio, newspaper ads, talk radio shows, as well as utilizing two recruiters to do presentations at community events. Shasta County also has a display in the library and has donated books to the library related to adoption.

Foster Care Awareness Month

The CDSS and a collaboration of organizations, legislators, private foundations, foster parents and youth gathered at the State Capitol on May 3, 2005, to participate in the kickoff for Foster Care Awareness Month. The event helped launch National Foster Care Awareness Month in California and raised public awareness about foster children and young people's needs for permanent life-long connections with adults. The event highlighted and celebrated the success of four teams from throughout California whose work together changed the life of a foster youth. Among others who received awards were former Assembly Member Darrell Steinberg, author on legislation that established California's improved approach to accountability; and long time child welfare leader, Pat Reynolds-Harris, founder and Director of the California Permanency for Youth Project.

Around 400 people representing the foster care community throughout California including current and former foster youth, foster parents, birth parents, non-profit organizations, and State and county representatives celebrated this day with awards, booths and a barbecue. Throughout California, the 58 counties celebrated Foster Care Awareness Month in their own way.

Specific Progress and Accomplishments Related to Diligent Recruitment

In March and April 2005, the 11 largest counties participated in a conference call with CDSS to discuss recruitment strategies. The participating counties were all asked how they were addressing the issue of disproportionality. An All County Information Notice (ACIN) No. 1-02-04, dated December 30, 2003, Foster Care Recruitment: Promising Practices, was distributed to the participating counties prior to the conference call along with a data extract called Foster Care Children/Substitute Care Providers by Ethnicity. CDSS discussed the different categories reflected on this data sheet and how the counties can use the CWS/CMS to track ethnicity. Counties have been encouraged to use the CWS/CMS tracking tool since it has the capability to track the ethnic background of the foster child as well as their substitute care provider(s).

Adoptions Program

ADOPTIONS PROGRAM

Inter-country Adoption

Activities that the State has undertaken for children adopted from other countries, including the provision of adoption and post adoption services.

Under California law, the provisions of services to facilitate an inter-country adoption fall exclusively within the purview of licensed private adoption agencies. California's inter-country adoption program provides for two kinds of adoptions, those finalized in the child's country of origin (Adopt Abroad) and those finalized in California. In each case, per the California Code of Regulations, a California adoption agency licensed in California to provide inter-country adoption services is required to have an agreement with a foreign agency that, in part:

- Verifies that the foreign agency is authorized to place children for inter-country adoption under the laws of its country;
- Specifies the responsibility of the foreign agency for the care of the child, including medical care and financial support;
- Specifies the authority and responsibility of the foreign agency in relation to placement, disruptions, finalization of the adoption or the return of the child to his or her native country.

Based on such agreements, California licensed inter-country adoption agencies perform home studies on perspective adoptive parents, provide required post-placement supervision on adoptions finalizing in California, and provide post-finalization supervision as required by the child's native country if the adoption is finalized in that country. Agencies also assist with re-adoption if required by Homeland Security in the Adopt Abroad program. Additional information about the State's inter-country adoption program may be found in the California Code of Regulations Section 35241 et seq.

Children who are adopted from other countries and who enter into State custody as a result of the disruption of a placement for adoption or the dissolution of an adoption, including the number of children, the agencies who handled the placement or the adoption, the plans for the child, and the reasons for the disruption or dissolution.

In each case, per the California Code of Regulations, the California adoption agency licensed in California to provide inter-country adoption services is required to have an agreement with a foreign agency that meets the regulatory requirements stated above.

Furthermore, California Family Code Section 8903 provides that, "For each inter-country adoption finalized in this state, the licensed adoption agency shall assume all responsibilities for the child including care, custody, and control as if the child had been

relinquished for adoption in this state from the time the child left the child's native country."

Based on the provisions of California law described above, a child that comes to California through an inter-country adoption process is not allowed to enter foster care if the adoption disrupts. Therefore, there were no children who have come to the United States for the purpose of adoption who entered foster care prior to the finalization of the adoption. Similarly, since there can be no foreign born children in such circumstances, there will be no agency to identify, nor corresponding reporting on any plans for such children or reasons for the disruption of adoptive placements prior to finalization.

Cross-Jurisdictional Plan and Probation Data

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN AND RESOURCES

The CDSS has continued to increase the use of cross-jurisdictional resources for adoptive placements, which include recruitment strategies such as the California Kids Connection Program/Website. Statewide, five programs have met monthly to share specific information regarding family and children. A support coordinator is responsible for assisting in matching waiting children with available families identified by the exchange. This website has, and will continue to have, both a secure and a public website. The public website is accessible to any Internet user. Visitors indicate their interest in specific children by sending an e-mail to the placing agency identified for each child. Many public adoption agencies throughout the State, also maintain their own website featuring children who are available for adoption.

AdoptUSKids website is the result of the Children's Bureau Initiative, a collaborative funded by the Adoption Exchange Association (AEA), Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families (HHS/ACF), and the Children's Bureau. The California Kids Connection, Recruitment Response Team is a part of the Children's Bureau's national recruitment initiative campaign for finding potential adoptive families. California's adoption exchange program, California Kids Connection provides several important services, all of which have the final goal of finding permanent homes for children who are available and waiting in the foster care system.

The California Kids Connection, Recruitment Response Team has been very successful in finding permanent homes for our foster children/youth. According to their last report, there are currently over 100 families in the process of adoption and is expressing interest in adopting sibling sets. To date, 644 families have responded to our recruitment campaign, not including the more recent responses in which they haven't had time to make a decision regarding adoption. Of the 644 families, there are currently over 19 percent of our families either in training and/or in the home study process. Unfortunately, California has received word that the Collaboration to AdoptUSKids is reducing the funding for California Kids Connection for the fiscal year 2005-2006. We are afraid that the 60 percent funding cut would limit the program's success and effectiveness in the future.

During Fiscal Year 2003-2004, the number of cooperative placements was 2,538. The number of cross-jurisdictional placements has continued to increase each fiscal year. California is committed to maintaining a year-to-year increase in cross-jurisdictional placements with a continued effort to further streamline the adoption process. This continued effort to revise law and regulations and system changes will result in a year-to-year increase in the number of cross-jurisdictional placements.

To facilitate cross-jurisdictional placements in the next year, the State will do the following: 1) issue an ACIN clarifying State and federal law regarding cross-jurisdictional adoptions; 2) amend the adoption regulations handbook referencing current State law regarding cross-jurisdictional adoptions; 3) review the existing regulations for

consistency with cross-jurisdictional adoption requirements; and 4) amend training curriculum to include cross-jurisdictional adoption requirements.

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CASES TRANSFERRED TO PROBATION

Description of the number of children under the care of the State child protection system who are transferred into the custody of the State juvenile justice system.

Methodology:

Two separate data files were created for the year under review using an extract from the CWS/CMS. The first file represented closed child welfare supervised placements. The second file represented Probation supervised placements with start dates within the same year. Children that appeared in both files were unduplicated and counted. Please see the following data table for results.

CWS/CMS

Children with WIC 300 and WIC 601/602 authority codes within a given year*

Federal Fiscal Years	Number of Children
1999/2000	559
2000/2001	644
2001/2002	709
2002/2003	643
2003/2004	815

***Data Caveat:**

This data should be considered preliminary, as the State is still exploring the most accurate data method to identify this population as well as a means of validating the data. Data from the CWS/CMS, California's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) system, is able to identify the number of children in out-of-home placement supervised by CWS, who have been terminated from a CWS placement, then subsequently placed in a Probation-supervised placement within a given Federal Fiscal Year. We cannot measure the duration of time this process takes until a system change occurs to track end dates for legal authority changes.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
AND
TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA)**

**APPLICATION
for
FFY 2006**

CFS-101

June 30, 2005

State of California
Department of Social Services

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT
APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2004 FUNDING
PLAN FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2005-2009

APPLICANT AGENCY: **State of California, Department of Social Services**

Organizational Unit: Office of Child Abuse Prevention
744 P Street, M.S. 11-82
Sacramento, California 95814

Designated Child Abuse and Neglect State Liaison Officer with NCCAN:

Susan Nisenbaum, Chief
Child Protection and Family Support Branch
(916) 651-6600

Application Information Contact:

Linda Hockman, Staff Services Manager I
Office of Child Abuse Prevention
(916) 651-6960

Applicant Agency's Employer Identification Number:

94-6001347

Introduction

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan is the primary prevention component of the State's Child and Family Services Title IV-B Plan, which is also referred as to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). The programs, services, and activities outlined in the CAPTA component are linked to the following goals and objectives of the entire CFSP plan:

- **Safety Outcome**

Goal 1: Children are first, and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect, they are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate; and services are provided to protect them.

- **Well Being Outcome**

Goal 3: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate; families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs; children, youth and families are active participants in the case planning process; and children receive adequate and appropriate services to meet their educational, physical, and mental health needs.

It is the State's intent to ensure a clear link between CAPTA and the Title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan goals by utilizing CAPTA funds to enhance community capacity to ensure the safety of children and promote the well-being of children and families. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), through its Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP), uses the CAPTA grant, in combination with other funds such as Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF), the Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT) Program and the State Children's Trust Fund to support counties, family resource centers, and other community based organizations through grants, contracts, and interagency agreements to promote child abuse prevention and to provide early intervention services that serve children and families within their own communities whenever possible.

When evaluating the programs that provide the services and the training that is necessary to ensure that there is the sufficient capacity to keep children safe and to enhance the well being of children and families, the CDSS/OCAP reviews the activities and assesses the results associated with these specific programs. The following is a report on the CDSS/OCAP programs and activities for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004 and the first six months of 2005. Discussions of future directions address the last six months of FFY 2005 and FFY 2006.

Identification of Program Areas Selected for Improvement

Area 8: Developing and facilitating training protocols for individuals mandated to report child abuse and neglect.

Area 12: Developing and enhancing the capacity of community-based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level.

Area 14: Supporting and enhancing collaboration among public health agencies, the child protection system, and private community-based programs to provide child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services (including linkages with education systems) and to address the health needs, including the mental health needs, of children identified as abused or neglected, including supporting prompt, comprehensive health and developmental evaluations for children who are the subject of substantiated child maltreatment reports.

Program Improvement Area 8: Programs, Activities, Services and Training

Child Abuse Training and Technical Assistance (CATTA)

Program Description

In accordance with sections 18961, 18963 (2), and 18978, et seq. of the California State Welfare and Institutions Code, the CDSS/OCAP is required to use private, non-profit agencies to provide the training and technical assistance necessary for planning, improving, developing and carrying out programs and activities related to the prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect; to disseminate information addressing issues of child abuse among multicultural and special needs populations; and to provide assistance and funding for the coordination and strengthening of child abuse prevention councils (CAPCs). In keeping with this mandate, the CDSS/OCAP and the California Office of Emergency Services (OES) have a grant with the California Institute of Human Services (CIHS) at Sonoma State University, to provide these services through the Child Abuse Training and Technical Assistance (CATTA) Program.

The CIHS has an agreement with the California State University, Channel Islands, that link these two entities as CATTA training centers. Both the grant and the agreement were due to sunset on June 30, 2005; however, both are being extended until June 30, 2007.

Objective

To support direct service providers in the field of child abuse through training and technical assistance that emphasizes prevention and family support services.

Activities/Results

In the period between October 1, 2003 and March 31, 2005, the CATTA training centers conducted 99 workshops, three conferences and provided approximately 700 hours of technical assistance. These activities served approximately 800 agencies and approximately 3,300 individuals. CATTA workshops and conferences can be grouped into the seven categories shown below:

<p>Multidisciplinary Interview Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Together in a Multi-Disciplinary Interview Team Setting Lessons for Investigative Teams: Understanding the Impact of Terror and Trauma 	<p>Peer Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spanish –Speaking Multi-Disciplinary Center Peer Review Meeting Multi-Disciplinary Investigation Center/Team Peer Review
<p>Working with Traumatized and/or Abused Children and Adolescents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healing Traumatic Grief in Children Bonding and Attachment in Maltreated Children Understanding the Drug Exposed Child: Approaches to Behavior and Learning Childhood Trauma: Consequences, Symptoms, Intervention and Treatment Effect of Trauma on the Developing Child: Implications for Adult Development Understanding and Communicating with the Adolescent Victim Beyond Zero to Five: Issues of Abuse Among Adolescents Working with Children Exposed to Trauma and Violence 	<p>Child Abuse Investigations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Abuse Investigations for First Responders Considerations When Conducting Forensic Interviews with Developmentally Delayed Victims Child Forensic Interview Training Clinic for Child Forensic Interview Specialists (English and Spanish) Child Abduction: Intervention and Resource Training Structured Interviews in Child Sexual Assault Cases: Maximizing Competency and Minimizing Suggestibility Child Forensic Interview Specialist Training on the Investigation of Child Maltreatment. Child Forensic Interview Specialist Training on the Investigation of Child Maltreatment
<p>Family Therapy/Parenting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent/Child Interaction Therapy (English and Spanish) Effective Clinical Strategies with Ambivalent Mothers Positive Parenting: working with Families to Enhance their Skills Parenting from the Inside Out The Impact of High Conflict Divorce upon Children and Families 	<p>Other Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Planning Action Planning Abuse Across the Lifespan Sex Offenders: Dispelling the Myths Munchausen by Proxy Strategic Planning Action Planning The Changing Criminal Justice System: The Impact on California Substance Abuse and Child Abuse Part II: Intervention and Treatment Domestic Violence Education in Spanish: A Training of Trainers
<p>Conference Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day for Children Conference Strengthening Families Across Generations Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment 	

From April 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006, the CATTA training centers are expected to provide workshops, conferences, and technical assistance on a scale that is proportionate to the prior period.

Objective

To support local child abuse prevention organizations, such as child abuse prevention councils (CAPCs), in building the capacity of local county level prevention communities by utilizing the eight (8) Regional Resource Consortiums (RRCs), which provide training, technical assistance, and networking opportunities to the CAPCs on a regional basis.

Activities/Results

During this reporting period, the CIHS completed a statewide needs assessment of the CAPCs. The needs assessment supplied data to enhance the delivery of technical assistance that is focused upon the capacity building needs of the CAPCs. The needs assessment revealed that CAPCs need technical assistance with regard to strategic planning and the integration of CAPC activities with child welfare service system improvement. In terms of networking and collaboration, CAPCs wanted assistance with increasing collaboration with child protective services, county government, Multidisciplinary Interview Teams and Child Death Review Teams. Other topics identified by the CAPCs for technical assistance and training included media relations; funding and sustainability; mandated reporter training, parent education; topics related to older children; substance abuse, and community and school violence.

CATTA staff completed the “Community Action Planning” activity that is designed to facilitate regional coordination and provide the CAPCs with information on relevant laws and with material that is designed to enhance the way that they conduct themselves as businesses. In the future, this planning process will address ways that the CAPCs can facilitate an increased level of integration with county child welfare service systems.

CATTA staff also provided technical assistance and support to the 11 Small County Initiative II grantees during the period from October 1, 2003 to March 31, 2005. CATTA provided travel stipends that allowed the grantees to participate in the meetings and events of their Regional Resource Consortia. These stipends helped the grantees attend the first statewide conference of child abuse prevention councils held in April 2005. CATTA retained a research and evaluation specialist who provided consultation to the grantees on program outcome measures and CATTA staff responded to requests from the grantees to conduct searches for relevant literature.

Objective

To support direct service providers in the field of child abuse prevention, through development and distribution of informational materials.

Activities/Results

CATTA made available over 1,650 resources on child abuse prevention to the approximately 14,000 contacts that are stored in its database.

CATTA maintains a web site of on-line resources including:

- A quarterly newsletter that is available to all interested parties. The newsletter is also distributed in hardcopy to approximately 10,000 constituents;

- An online directory of the child abuse prevention, intervention and treatment organizations in the 58 counties of California that provide services that support children and families;
- Web pages that are devoted to CAPCs; Multi-Disciplinary Interview Centers/Teams; training that is available; publications directories and searchable databases that are focused upon the prevention, intervention and treatment of child abuse and neglect; topics of interest to the CATTA constituency; and links to additional online resources.

CATTA developed and distributed videocassettes on topics that address the programs of CATTA constituents.

CATTA operates a toll free information and referral number that is utilized by the public and by professionals.

CATTA maintains listservs for the following groups:

- General CAPTA constituency
- Child Abuse Prevention Councils
- Multi-Disciplinary Centers/Teams
- Child Abuse Treatment (CHAT) Program
- Small County Initiative II counties
- Spanish-Speaking Child Forensic Interviewers

Objective

To maintain a high quality service through evaluation processes.

Activities/Results

CATTA developed and implemented an evaluation plan for its three program components which are training and technical assistance; development of Regional Resource Consortia, and information development and distribution.

Training is evaluated on an ongoing basis as participants are asked to complete written evaluations at the conclusion of each training. Participants are asked to complete a 90-day follow-up evaluation that includes questions regarding the implementation and utilization of the training material by individuals and agencies.

The CAPC needs assessment that was completed by the CIHS and mentioned earlier was one component of the evaluation plan for the Regional Resource Consortia.

Strategies: Family Resource Center and Family Support Program Training and Technical Assistance

Program Description

The CDSS/OCAP has developed a consortium of three regional training centers, called Strategies, to enhance the quality of the programs and services provided by family resource centers (FRCs) and family support programs. Evolving research indicates that FRCs offer promising approaches to address such issues as: child abuse and neglect, substance abuse, family violence, family instability, juvenile violence/crime, employment, community disintegration, family isolation, health, and educational outcomes.

The Strategies Project is one aspect of the CDSS/OCAP statewide-integrated training program. The goal of Strategies is to provide training and technical assistance to develop and support prevention-focused FRCs that offer core services and comprehensive support to families. The Strategies Project consists of the Youth for Change/Paradise Ridge FRC in Butte County, the Interface Children and Family Services in Ventura County, and the Children's Bureau of Southern California with offices in Los Angeles and Orange counties.

FRCs that offer core services provide parent education, child development activities, resource and referral, drop-in availability, peer-to-peer supports, life skills, and advocacy. FRCs that offer comprehensive support services provide integrated case management, home visitation, child abuse/neglect treatment, family health and wellness, family economics and self sufficiency, family literacy, substance abuse treatment, youth development, and community development activities.

The CDSS/OCAP utilizes Strategies to train professionals, paraprofessionals, volunteers and parents in home visitation, center-based services, team case management, non-profit management, collaboration and linkages, and community leadership. Strategies provide training and technical assistance, which consists of onsite/phone consultations, teleconferences, online communications, lending libraries and in-office/phone consultation. Strategies provide training and technical assistance, which consists of onsite/phone consultations, teleconferences, online communications, lending libraries and in-office/phone consultation. Strategies also foster statewide communication through a web site and a quarterly newsletter. The Strategies Project grantees are key partners in developing and supporting both regional and statewide networks of FRCs and family support programs.

The current grant for the Strategies Project is due to expire on June 30, 2005. Negotiations are underway for a new grant that will begin July 1, 2005, and end on June 30, 2008.

Objective

To increase the capacity and expertise of FRCs throughout California, Strategies is to deliver three, three-day comprehensive FRC Core trainings per year; to conduct three

Peer Review trainings per year (in which approximately 20 FRCs will participate); to implement leadership training for up to 25 FRCs; to conduct four teleconference series; and to conduct six capacity building events.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, the FRC Core training was presented four times to a total of 183 participants. Two Peer Review trainings were presented to 11 FRCs with a total of 38 participants. The Facilitative Leadership training, which includes an intensive technical assistance follow-up component, was delivered to 23 FRCs statewide. Ten statewide teleconferences were conducted, with six addressing FRC fundamentals and four addressing nonprofit management issues. A total of 73 FRCs participated in the series of teleconferences. Thirty-four capacity building events, whose topics included “FRC Strategic Planning”, “Marketing Your FRC,” and “Funding Your FRC or Family Support Program”, were conducted for 1,613 participants.

Objective:

To increase the utilization of promising practices and improve the quality of services for home visiting and family support programs. Strategies is to provide 80 hours of training per year on promising practices in the areas of in-home visitation, supervision, case management, and family support strategies.

Activities/ Results

In FFY 2004, 10 trainings totaling 80 hours were provided to 448 attendees. The trainings included “Home Visiting 101”, “Case Management Principles”, and “Making Supervision Work”.

Objective

To increase networking among FRCs statewide and regionally, provide a statewide listserv, maintain an effective website, disseminate the “Working Strategies” newsletter, add networking activities to all training activities, and convene regional meetings for the purpose of peer-to-peer communications. In conjunction with First Five and other collaborative partners, support efforts for increased networking statewide amongst FRCs.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, a statewide listserv, known as “Strategies Announce”, grew to include more than 1,100 subscribers. The Strategies website received 112,500 hits during this fiscal year. Among other helpful items, the website contains a calendar of events and a document bank of relevant forms, and policies and procedures designed to reduce work and share effective tools. The “Working Strategies” quarterly newsletter, with lead articles written by nationally-known figures from the family support field, was distributed to over 4,500 subscribers. Networking activities have been added to all Strategies trainings and workshops. Regional meetings, including those held in conjunction with First Five and other collaborative partners, were convened throughout the State.

Objective

To improve and expand the dissemination of information to isolated areas and special needs populations. Provide regional lending libraries of family support, home visiting, organizational development/practices, strategic planning and best practices materials.

Activities/Results

By the end of FFY 2004, each region maintained a regional lending library, added to it regularly, and promoted it regionally, particularly to isolated and special needs populations. Staff of the three Strategies regions also utilized the materials to foster professional development among the staff of FRCs and community based organizations. These activities continued in FFY 2005.

Objective

To support the successful implementation of CRPs through training and technical assistance. Provide training and technical assistance for three or more CRPs.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, the development of a training resource manual began and training was conducted for three CRPs in Kern, San Mateo, and Napa counties. In addition, Strategies provided technical assistance to the three CRPs through site visits and e-mail support. During the first half of FFY 2005, which included the beginning of the third CRP funding cycle, a training session was conducted for the citizen review panels in Kern, San Mateo, and Alameda Counties. Strategies provided technical assistance to these three CRPs through site visits and email support. Technical assistance was provided to one county that applied for funding to operate a CRP. The assistance given was designed to help the county develop a work plan that is reflective of the CRP mission which is to evaluate the policies, practices, and procedures of the CWS agency.

During SFY 04-05, Strategies provided the local CRPs with approximately 50 hours of training/technical assistance. Though plans for SFY 05-06 have not yet been finalized, Strategies expects to provide substantially more hours in the next fiscal year, not to exceed 360 hours.

Objective

To provide training/technical support for the Supporting Father Involvement Study through meeting facilitation/coordination, training development and communications.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, two all-project trainings were conducted for the five study sites. In FFY 2005 one all-project training was held. Topics covered in all three trainings included case management skills, and engagement and retention of families.

Many of the Strategies objectives, activities and results for 2005 have yet to be reported; however, they are expected to be in a proportionate amount to those completed in FFY 2004.

During the remainder of FFY 2005 and in FFY 2006, some activities will change as SFY 2005-2006 will see the implementation of a new 3-year grant cycle; however, the bulk of the current activities are expected to continue.

Mandated Reporter Training

In response to the increasing numbers of mandated reporters requiring training, the CDSS/OCAP continues to focus on the availability and accessibility of mandated reporter training. Free online training is offered and in all instances, attendance, consumer profile, and consumer satisfaction data are collected for this online training.

Objective

To provide on-line mandated reporter training.

Activities/Results

A basic online training for mandated reporters was placed on the web during FFY 2003. The training was developed by subject matter experts, in cooperation with the CDSS/OCAP. The materials were developed to both enhance other forms of mandated reporter training (e.g. classroom) and/or provide stand-alone mandated reporter training (e.g. at-home participants). Continuing education units are provided for a minimal fee upon request.

In FFY 2004, 2,359 participants took the online training course; in the first half of FFY 2005, 1,825 participants took the online training course. For the last half of FFY 2005, the estimated number of participants is 1,650.

Objective

To increase the capacity of the Mandated Reporter Training project to provide face-to-face trainings for mandated reporters and training of trainers.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, the Mandated Reporter Training Project staff worked with subject matter experts and key consultants to develop a one day mandated reporter and “training of trainers” session. Subject matter experts and key consultants represented education, the clergy; child care providers; and health care, and criminal justice professionals. In FFY 2005, there were eight face-to-face training sessions for mandated reporters. These were held throughout California. There was one training for trainers’ session completed in this time period and 35 people participated. A second training for trainers’ session is to be completed during March of 2005.

Objective

To increase service to underserved populations.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004 -2005, staff of the Mandated Reporter Training Project developed and delivered parent outreach and awareness building events designed to engage the community in parent education and prevention activities. These types of activities are a small part of the Project's responsibilities which are focused upon the provision of training to mandated reporters.

During FFYs 2004 and 2005, as part of its Parent Outreach efforts, staff of the Mandated Reporter Training Project coordinated with CATTA's eight Regional Resource Coordinators to build their awareness of parenting resources. Eight face-to-face sessions were offered throughout the State; two sessions in FFY 2004 and six sessions in FFY 2005.

The target date to have the core mandated reporter online training translated into Spanish and posted online is in April 2005.

Between October 1, 2004 and May 14, 2005, Parent Outreach activities will include five training sessions. It is projected that 20-40 participants will attend each training session.

Medically Fragile Infants

Program Description

The CDSS/OCAP continues to utilize CAPTA funds for the Special Start Training Program (SSTP), which provides training to medical professionals, social workers, professionals from other disciplines, and foster and adoptive parents on assessment and developmental interventions for high-risk newborns who are discharged from intensive care nurseries. The primary objective of the program is to facilitate enhanced parent/infant interactions and promote the development and recovery of these medically fragile infants. The core training program is called the Family Infant Relationship Support Training (FIRST).

Objective

To provide a statewide training program that targets foster parents and relative caregivers and that trains social workers and other professionals, including occupational therapists, nurses and home visitors. The training includes assessment and planning of appropriate interventions that meet the needs of medically fragile infants.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, approximately 400 professionals and 350 foster parents/relative caregivers completed the FIRST training.

The Special Start Training Evaluation was conducted and the evaluation captured FIRST training classes from January 2004 to June 2004. The study design, which included pre and post instructional testing, measured changes in knowledge level of

course participants. One finding was that most attendees recognized the importance of adjusting the environment, in order to facilitate the growth and development of premature infants, but parents and foster parents were far more likely than professionals to recognize the importance of the family context in working with medically fragile infants.

It is projected that in the first six months of FFY 2005, 425 professionals and 375 foster parents/relative caregivers will complete FIRST training.

The CDSS/OCAP will continue to contract with an approved institution to provide these classes and is now processing requests for a multi-year contract in-lieu of an annual contract.

Objective:

To maintain curriculum standards so that the FIRST program meets the certification standards for the Newborn Individualized Development Care and Assessment Program and/or the Family Infant Special Relationship Support Training.

Activities/Results

The CDSS/OCAP will continue to offer the eight-hour introductory workshop; the practicum workshop; twelve individual practice and mentoring sessions; the skills check; the advanced practicum; continuing education days; and the training of trainers program in a manner that meets certification requirements. Some of the project material that will be developed revised and updated as required, includes digital video training tapes of premature infant behavior, SSTP brochures and other hard copy material. Project staff will participate in the development of the website and the booklet, "Getting to Know Your Baby".

Objective

To increase and broaden the audience of professionals in California requesting training on medically fragile infants.

Activities/Results:

In FFY 2005, the program will offer training that prepares foster parents and biological parents for the transition from one caregiver to another. The training includes curricula that instructs foster parents on how to talk with biological parents; that promotes individualized caregiver interactions; and that supports foster parents in providing the next caregiver with infant behavioral information.

In FFY 2005, a website was established displaying information about the Special Start Training, including the dates, registration, and other applicable information. In addition to the training information, the website includes videotaped vignettes to demonstrate patterns of high risk infant behavior that include autonomic, motor and behaviors that occur while infants are asleep, drowsy, alert or crying, etc.

In FFY 2005, the program began to offer FIRST training that is taught by a professional trainer and a parent trainer, whose basis for peer training and support include her experiences with her infant while in the neonatal intensive care unit.

Program Improvement Area 12: Programs, Activities, Services, and Training

Parent Leadership

Program Description

The Parent Leadership grant with Parents Anonymous® Inc. provides training and technical assistance to administrators and service providers at the county level, to increase their awareness of the benefits of working in partnership with parent leaders. The goal of the grant is to foster a collaborative relationship in local communities where parents and professionals can work together to ensure quality services for children and families. This grant is funded through June 30, 2006.

Objective

To provide intensive training and technical assistance to designated county teams selected by the CDSS/OCAP. The purpose of this intensive training is to support counties in adopting Shared Leadership as a key component in the decision making process of the county child abuse prevention system.

Activities/Results

From October 1, 2003 to March 31, 2005, Parents Anonymous® Inc. provided intensive training and technical assistance to three targeted counties: Amador, Calaveras and Shasta. Each of these counties received two intensive trainings that linked Parents Anonymous® Inc. to the Child Abuse Prevention Councils and local prevention services. In order to assist each county in developing an effective Shared Leadership Plan, Parents Anonymous® Inc. completed an initial telephone assessment with the CAPIT/CBCAP liaisons in each county to determine its training needs. These liaisons represent public child welfare, education, and probation agencies that have been designated by the Board of Supervisors to administer CAPIT, CBCAP and PSSF funds.

Objective

To strengthen and expand the California Parent Leadership Team (CPLT) that will work in partnership with Parents Anonymous® Inc. to provide training and technical assistance to the counties. The team will participate in policy and planning activities at the State level and support parents in leadership roles that strengthen their communities. The team will consist of 18 ethnically diverse parent leaders from throughout the State.

Activities/Results

During 2004, two new members from Sacramento and Santa Cruz Counties were added to the California Parent Leadership team, after an intensive recruitment effort that targeted the CAPIT/CBCP coordinators, the Child Abuse Prevention Councils and those people and organizations that receive the newsletter, "The Parent Leadership Express".

Team members are required to attend two team meetings annually and to participate in a monthly conference call. During meetings and conference calls, the California Parent Leadership team receives training and technical assistance that is designed to assist its members in performing the tasks and assignments related to their roles as members of State and county advisory bodies. This training and technical assistance focuses upon the application of Shared Leadership Principles to the tasks that members are performing at present. They receive other training that is designed to facilitate their effectiveness as members of policy-making and advisory bodies. A two-day team meeting was held on November 16 and 17, 2003, in Sacramento. A second meeting was held on June 19, 2004, in Sacramento. In addition to the team meetings, 11 team teleconference calls were held during this reporting period.

Objective

To provide training/technical assistance to strengthen the parent leadership efforts in the counties other than the three targeted counties of Amador, Calaveras and Shasta.

Activities/Results

In addition to providing intensive support to the target counties of Amador, Calaveras and Shasta counties, Parents Anonymous® Inc., and the California Parent Leadership Team provided outreach, training and consultation activities to other counties. Examples of their activities are:

- In Kern County, on May 27, 2004, Parents Anonymous® Inc. staff met with parents and staff from the Family Resource Centers and staff from First 5 Kern to plan for a Shared Leadership Training in the fall.
- In Nevada County, Parent Leadership Training was held on Saturday, March 6, 2004. Parents Anonymous® Inc. staff coordinated the training with Sierra Nevada Children's Services (SNCS) and the county's Parent Leadership Council, an advisory group to SNCS.
- In Orange County, on April 23, 2004, Parents Anonymous® Inc. staff and a Parent Leader provided training to 125 parents and providers attending the Head Start conference in Orange County. During two workshops, Parents Anonymous® Inc. presented the benefits of using a Shared Leadership model to strengthen child abuse prevention programs in local communities.
- In Riverside County, on April 28, 2004, Parent Leadership/Shared Leadership training was provided by Parents Anonymous® Inc. staff and a CPLT member at Riverside County's Annual Children's Conference. The training focused on identifying and supporting Parent Leaders, the benefits and challenges of Parent Leadership, and developing a Shared Leadership plan for Riverside County.

In addition to the trainings and technical assistance provided to the above counties, four regional presentations were made to the Child Abuse Training and Technical Assistance (CATTA) project and to family resource centers to promote the benefits of adopting a Shared Leadership Model in decision making processes. Also, Parents Anonymous® Inc. staff sent correspondence to the designated eight regional Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) coordinators to introduce this Parent Leadership/Shared Leadership Initiative and express interest in participating in regional meetings. Following this initial correspondence, Parents Anonymous® Inc. and the California Parent Leadership Team developed liaisons with the CAPC coordinators.

Objective

To produce and disseminate issues of the “Parent Leadership Express” newsletter and highlight strategies and successes relating to Parent Leadership and Shared Leadership.

Activities/Results

Between October 2003 and March 31, 2005, Parents Anonymous® Inc. produced and disseminated three newsletters in collaboration with the California Parent Leadership Team. The “Parent Leadership Express” newsletters were distributed in January and June 2004 and in March 2005. All three newsletters were disseminated to CAPIT/CBCA liaisons, child abuse prevention councils, northern and southern offices of CATTA, community-based prevention organization representatives, and other key stakeholders in the prevention field throughout California.

Objective

To continue the comprehensive longitudinal evaluation currently underway to document county level changes and successes and barriers in implementing parent leadership and shared leadership strategies. Assess changes in attitudes and behaviors regarding parent leadership while also evaluating the project activities.

Activities/Results

Evaluation tools were used to gather information about California county changes, successes and barriers in implementing Parent Leadership/Shared Leadership strategies and in assessing changes in attitudes and behaviors regarding Parent Leadership and Shared Leadership. The evaluation tools included a standard training evaluation form, separate Parent Leadership Assessment tools for Administrators/Staff and Parents, and the Parent Leadership Inventory.

Evaluation data was gathered from administrators, staff and parents who attended Parent Leadership/Shared Leadership Trainings in Amador, Calaveras, Shasta, and Nevada Counties. In addition, evaluation data was gathered from the California Parent Leadership Team (CPLT).

Program Area 14: Programs, Activities, Services and Training

Small County Initiative II (SCI II)

Program Description

The SCI II builds upon the successes of the initial Small County Initiative. It is targeted toward small counties (population 70,000 or less) and provides additional funding and resources to support and strengthen the child abuse prevention systems of these counties. In addition to the CWS agency, child abuse prevention systems may include agencies such as public health, mental health, substance abuse services, law enforcement, schools, regional centers, and private nonprofit agencies that provide family support services.

The core objective of the program is to support positive systemic change that increases county capacity for the delivery of child abuse prevention services. Limited fiscal resources, personnel, and supportive services make it difficult for some small counties to compete for funding and to participate in service initiatives that are likely to require matching funds, sufficient quantities of highly qualified professional staff and extensive supportive services.

Eleven counties (Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Del Norte, Glenn, Plumas, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Yuba) were selected to participate in the initiative based on a competitive process. Each participating county organization developed a scope of work specific to the status and needs of its county. The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) has been contracted to provide the evaluation of the SCI II. The evaluation should be completed in FFY 2007.

Objective

To provide training and technical assistance to participating county organizations through various the CDSS/OCAP funded projects (CATTa, Strategies, the Breakthrough Series Collaborative, etc.). Determine each county's specific training and technical assistance needs and identify training available through these projects.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, the majority of the SCI II counties participated in the Breakthrough Series, which consisted of several teleconferences and face to face trainings. They received training and technical assistance on Differential Response and other aspects of the CWS System Improvements. This training also facilitated networking between SCI II counties and other California counties involved in early implementation of system improvement activities.

Technical assistance has been provided to SCI II counties through CATTa. During FFY 2004, over 130 hours of assistance was provided in response to requests from the counties. Activities included the maintenance of the SCI II listserv and the distribution of pertinent messages; travel stipends to support SCI II grantees' participation in their Regional Resource Consortium meetings and events; consultation services on outcome

measures with an evaluation specialist; research and distribution of professional materials; and responses to individualized training requests. Training on “Effective Child Welfare Practice in Rural Communities” was offered in El Centro and in Moreno Valley during the spring of 2005.

The CDSS/OCAP consultants regularly provide phone and email technical assistance to the SCI II counties and make site visits when requested to do so by the counties. When needed, they bring CDSS staff with technical expertise in an area that is of interest to a county. For example, a county’s request was met when a CDSS/OCAP staff member, with expertise in regulations, traveled to a county with the CDSS/OCAP consultant, to provide needed technical assistance.

Objective

To support development of networking among the participating counties through scheduled meetings with the CDSS/OCAP; the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and county organizations on an “as needed basis” using mechanisms deemed appropriate by the participants (e.g. “face-to-face” meetings, teleconference, chat room capability, etc).

Activities/Results

Counties have had opportunities to network with each other, with OCAP, and with other CDSS/OCAP staff and community organizations at the various Breakthrough Series trainings and teleconferences. In addition, SCI II counties attend monthly regional child abuse prevention council (CAPC) meetings with their neighboring counties, many of which are also participating in SCI II.

Since one of the objectives of the SCI II is to strengthen the child abuse prevention systems in the participating counties, SCI II and other California counties were encouraged to attend the Child Abuse Prevention Month “Event at the Capitol” and the first statewide Child Abuse Prevention Council Conference in April 2005. These events provided an opportunity to connect with staff from many counties, the State, FRCs and other community based organizations. County staff received information, training and assistance, recognition, and encouragement through these events.

SCI II Evaluation

Program Description

The CDSS/OCAP has a contract with UCLA to design an evaluation that will generate data that can be used by the CDSS/OCAP and the counties participating in the SCI II. The evaluation will be used to identify successes and the barriers to achieving the goals and objectives identified in each county’s scope of work. Each county’s scope of work is focused upon strengthening the child abuse prevention system in that county.

Objective

To collect data to evaluate the initiative by coordinating evaluation design and data needs with UCLA and the participating counties.

Activities/Results

During FFY 2004, UCLA developed an evaluation tool, to measure the improvement in the services in participating counties, and tested it with the majority of participating counties. The CDSS/OCAP and UCLA utilized conference calls, emails and two face-to-face meetings to fine tune the evaluation tool. An assessment tool, which will be used to determine the current status of each county's services, was completed by several counties in January 2005. Site visits by UCLA evaluators to collect information and interview staff began in Spring 2005.

Objective

To determine if, and to what extent, each SCI II county has successfully implemented the program development objectives specified in its plan.

Activities/Results

A survey instrument has been given to the counties and has been completed by most of the program participants. UCLA is compiling the data and working with counties to make any necessary revisions to the instrument and provide assistance where needed.

Objective

To evaluate the success of SCI II client service programs which include parent education, family resource center development/enhancement, home visiting, and outreach to underserved populations in terms of program implementation, integration into the CWS system, and their function as a Differential Response resource for workers and families in the child protective services (CPS) system.

Activities/Results

In the first six months of FFY 2005, the UCLA evaluators began collecting data on the client services programs at the county level. They began site visits to the SCI II counties to interview program directors, direct care staff, and child abuse prevention council and CPS representatives. The interviews focus upon specific programs that are being developed/enhanced through SCI II and will address data collection, system governance, funding, community involvement, outreach to populations in need, etc.

Prevention Data System**Program Description**

This project would have implemented the conceptual design created for the CDSS/OCAP by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) to capture key data on prevention activities funded, partially or completely, with State General Fund and federal fund sources.

Activities/Results

The project as originally conceived cannot go forward due to current State budget issues and technology rules and guidelines. However, the CDSS/OCAP will investigate implementation of a smaller scale system which can be maintained by staff with existing

desktop hardware and software. If determined feasible, the CDSS/OCAP will have a development and implementation plan by the end of the second quarter of FFY 2005-2006.

Prevention Advisory Council

Program Description/Objectives

The Prevention Advisory Council (PAC) was created pursuant to the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention program requirements. The PAC acted in an advisory capacity to the CDSS/OCAP. The focus of the PAC was on the development and expansion of family resource and family support collaboratives and networks that are comprised of community-based, county and State level organizations and agencies serving children and families.

Activities/Results

In keeping with the Stakeholders' recommendation that prevention be incorporated into all aspects of the CWS system, the Statewide CRP will now provide the function that was provided previously by the Prevention Advisory Council (PAC). This holistic approach fulfills the Stakeholder finding that prevention must be the foundation of the CWS System Improvements and not a separate or stand alone activity. This will also meet the requirements of the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program, by providing input to the CDSS/OCAP on community-based, prevention-focused family resource and support programs. The focus of the PAC has been on the development and expansion of family resource and family support collaboratives and networks comprised of community-based, county and State level organizations and agencies to serve children and families. In its advisory role, the Statewide CRP will integrate a primary prevention/early intervention perspective into its review of Statewide CWS policies, practices and procedures.

Evidenced-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare Services in California

Program Description

As part of the California statewide CWS System Improvement activities to transform how child welfare services are practiced in California, OCAP conducted a competitive process to develop, implement and maintain an Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for child welfare practice. Children's Hospital, San Diego was awarded the grant on January 1, 2004. The three year grant cycle will end December 2006.

Development of the Clearinghouse will be accomplished through a participatory process involving a small advisory group of knowledgeable individuals and practitioners. The advisory group will be supported by a scientific panel of State and national level research specialists. The Clearinghouse design will serve to sort and disseminate evidence based practices (EBP) as a useful resource for social work practitioners and their community partners including those in the fields of public health, mental health, substance abuse treatment, developmental services and community based organizations. The Clearinghouse will include: literature, research, evaluation,

protocols, tools, methods of practice, curricula, funding source information, and statutes/regulations.

Objective

Convene an advisory committee to guide the work of establishing and maintaining the Clearinghouse.

Activities/Results

The Clearinghouse grant was awarded to Children's Hospital, San Diego in January of 2004. Due to a transition period in California government, the grant went through several processes of review before it was finally executed in August of 2004.

The 16 member advisory committee was selected later in the year and includes researchers and child welfare service practitioners. Also included is staff from the CWS training academies, the County Welfare Directors Association, the CWS System Improvements project, community agencies and foundations.

Objective

Develop formal criteria for selection of practices as evidence-based and review a wide variety of sources to identify practices meeting the criteria.

Activities/Results

During its initial meeting in February 2005, the advisory committee began the work of developing a system to evaluate evidence based practices (EBPs) by nominating 11 topics for initial review and classification. These 11 topics are:

- parent training programs;
- parental depression;
- substance abuse;
- domestic/intimate partner violence;
- abuse in out-of-home care;
- post adoption services;
- reunification services (pre-return and post-unification);
- what keeps children out of foster care (pre-removal, family preservation)
- housing/homelessness;
- youth transition;
- trauma treatment for children in foster care.

The advisory committee identified parental depression, substance abuse and domestic/intimate partner violence as the three main clinical issues associated with parents who are referred to child welfare services. For each topic, the panel envisions the system as one that will provide links to resources that address interventions, clinical issues and behaviors.

During the second half of FFY 2005-2006, Children's Hospital, San Diego will meet with the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) and the regional training academies (RTAs) that provide core social worker training to discuss the

Clearinghouse, planned products and services, and provide program materials for integration into social worker training. To further support CalSWECE and RTA activities, Children's Hospital will also provide back-up literature for each selected EBP.

During this same time period, Children's Hospital, San Diego will videotape selected EBP presentations and distribute copies of these videos with written support material to the 11 pilot counties implementing the CWS System Improvements. The videos and support material will also be given to other counties identified by the CDSS/OCAP. Copies of the edited versions will be provided for posting on the website, which will be operated as part of this project. Lectures/workshops on the selected EBPs featured through the Clearinghouse will be offered in spring or fall 2006 at the Children's Hospital, San Diego conference facility.

Objective

Design a conceptual framework for an interactive web-based application of the Clearinghouse that supports access to and implementation of EBPs in the field of social work.

Activities/Results

The Clearinghouse Advisory Committee has specified criteria for the website design. The material will be prepared in language that is easily understood by both social work practitioners and community partners. The design of the website will include navigational bars, links to resources that are specific to EBPs within child welfare services with related/relevant links; a keyword search feature, online polls; customer feedback and "join the e-mail list " features, statistics tracking, and contact information. Other information on the website will include such background information as the selection process for the topic areas, the criteria for the selection of topics and the history of the Clearinghouse for Evidence-Based Practice. At least once a month, Clearinghouse staff, in cooperation with the scientific advisors, will select an article for web based dissemination.

Objective

The CDSS/OCAP will conduct a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process to fund the technical development of the web-based application and query systems. The CDSS/OCAP released a competitive RFP during SFY 2004-2005 and selected a grantee to perform the task of technical development of the web based system.

Activities/Results

To facilitate project timelines, Children's Hospital, San Diego will subcontract for the development of the web-based application and query systems. The target date for a functional website is in August 2005.

Family Violence Response Teams

Program Description

This project provided training to law enforcement personnel, child protection workers, victim advocates and other entities involved in domestic violence issues on developing multi-disciplinary Family Violence Response Teams (FVRTs). The project ended December 31, 2004.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, the project provided one intensive training on developing FVRTs to 30 professionals in the field of domestic violence issues. There was one training of trainers that was conducted with seven professionals from communities that want to develop a FVRT.

In FFY 2005, one intensive training on developing FVRTs. was provided to 22 professionals in the field of domestic violence issues. Also, provided was one training of trainers to five professionals from communities that want to develop a FVRT.

Safely Surrendered Babies

Program Description

This program publicizes a State law which allows a distressed parent, who is either unable or unwilling to care for a child, to legally, confidentially, and safely surrender his or her baby at a hospital or other designated location within three days of birth.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004,

- English and Spanish language radio, television, and cable time was purchased in five major California markets (San Diego, Los Angeles, Fresno, San Francisco, and Sacramento). The contractor was able to negotiate free air time and inclusion on radio and television station web sites that provided links to the CDSS' Safely Surrendered Baby Site (SSB) site.
- The CDSS contracted for \$750,000 in statewide media resources and received an additional \$750,000 in free media.
- Three simultaneous press conferences were held in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento to launch the public relations campaign.
- A county support kit that includes campaign radio and television masters, print material masters, and "how to" information on buying media time and space, conducting public relations efforts, and community outreach was distributed to all 58 counties.

In FFY 2005

- The California Broadcasters Association has agreed to air the Safely Surrendered Baby Campaign on member television stations across the state.

- SSB news releases were distributed to all California campuses through the University News Wire.
- Advertisements were placed in eight college newspapers.
- The posters, brochures, and wallet cards were distributed throughout California to schools, service organizations and government offices.

Parent Outreach Project

Program Description

Currently, the CDSS/OCAP funds a grant program to plan, develop, implement and evaluate a multi-year child abuse prevention outreach campaign through the Institute for Human Services at California State University, Sonoma. This campaign is designed to: 1) build public awareness of parenting resources and 2) build and strengthen the capacity of local communities to conduct prevention activities that include media outreach and other public relations activities.

Activities/Results

In FFY 2004, project staff

- Identified eight regional resource coordinators throughout the State that had strong prevention leadership experience and a strong desire to promote prevention and the Parent Outreach Project in their region as well as increase contact with the media to promote prevention.
- Developed and delivered professional training to the regional resource coordinators through a one day intensive training on engaging the media, public speaking and the key messages of Parent Outreach.
- Participated in promotional events that were held in Southern, Central and Northern California. Participants were provided with Parent Outreach materials and Parent Outreach had a resource table at the events. The Southern California regional event had 144 participants, the Northern California regional event had 200 participants and the Central California regional event had 90 participants.
- Maintained and updated the comprehensive, statewide, online, searchable database of parenting resources. As of June 30, 2004 the database had over 9,900 records. Directory resources are continually researched and updated.
- Provided information and referral services via a toll free phone number that offered information about local resources for parents. This service received approximately 360 calls during this time period. Training was provided to the regional resource coordinators regarding the information and referral service that supports callers in using the Statewide online resource directory.
- Staffed eight resource display tables at various conferences throughout the State.
- Developed materials to promote the toll free number and website address. Approximately 224,368 promotional materials were distributed.

In the first six months of FFY 2005, Project Staff will

- Monitor the activities of the eight regional resource coordinators who conduct parent outreach activities.
- Develop and deliver eight, one-day parent outreach events to engage the community in parent education and prevention awareness building activities. It is estimated that 50-100 people will attend each event.
- Continue to verify and update the statewide database of parenting resources.
- Continue to contract with information and referral services to respond to callers. It is estimated that the level of calls will increase from the prior time period with the increase of outreach activities.
- Provide resource displays at five conferences.
- Continue to verify and update the database.

During the last six months of FFY 2005

- The Outreach Project has been extended for an additional year. During this time, the Project will continue to verify and update the database.
- The contract with information and referral services to respond to callers will be continued.
- Trainings and outreach activities to promote the toll free number and website will be conducted.

Supporting Father Involvement Study (SFI Study)

Program Description

During SFY 2002-2003, the CDSS/OCAP designed, developed and implemented a five site study of an intervention intended to improve the quality and level of positive father involvement in at-risk families. The study also includes a component aimed at improving the father friendliness of Family Resource Centers (FRCs), community based organizations and county and State agencies.

The goals of the intervention are to increase positive father-child involvement, which will be reflected in the amount and quality of that involvement; the continued involvement with the child over time; the father's awareness and understanding of child development and the father's awareness of how to handle couple relationship issues. The intervention is designed to affect the factors that impact father involvement which include personal stress, psychological symptoms, the overall health of fathers; their relationships with the mothers of their children; and the father's social support network and contact with public and private agencies.

In terms of the target population, preference is given to men who are about to become fathers or who have at least one young child age birth through three years, so as to facilitate early intervention. Men with children aged four to seven may be included in the study.

Since the impact of the relationship with the child's mother has implications for father involvement, the men in the study have to be married, cohabiting with or romantically

involved with the child's mother. The father and mother may be co-parenting a baby or young child or the father may have a partner who agrees to be involved in the project and is able to commit to participation in the project for 18 months.

Teen parents (those below 18), families with protective orders in place, families with open Child Protective Services (CPS) cases, families in which either parent is severely mentally ill and families with current serious problems with substance abuse are not eligible to participate given the nature of these issues which could compete with the needs of their children. When the screening process reveals that these issues are present, the fathers and the families are referred to other services at the family resource center or in the community.

Co-parenting couples who are accepted into the study are offered one of three options:

- A 16-week couples group with the father and mother eligible for case management services. Couples may be referred for therapeutic services to address serious couple or parenting issues that need more time and attention than can be provided in the group.
- A 16-week fathers group for the male partner. There will be some sessions that the mother attends. Both the father and the mother are eligible for case management services and couples may be referred for therapeutic services to address serious couple or parenting issues that need more time and attention than can be provided in the group.
- A control group that will receive a 3 hour information session about the importance of fathers in children's lives and the services of a case manager to work with the mother and father in obtaining services at family resource centers or in the community at large.

The 16-week groups are based upon a curriculum guide that has been developed for this initiative that target several risk and protective factors that have been established in research studies as keys to the involvement of fathers with their children. These factors include the fathers:

- individual adjustment (self-confidence, depression, anxiety)
- relationship with the mother of the child (couple relationship quality)
- skills and confidence as a parent
- three-generational family patterns, and
- stresses on the family, including those from work (or lack of it), supports (or lack of them), and family-related policies in the surrounding community and State agencies.

The curriculum guide provides a schedule for addressing these risk and protective factors, with a set of key questions and suggested exercises to guide the group leaders' discussions with the fathers or couples on a weekly basis.

Objective

To complete a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the Supporting Father Involvement Study

Activities/Results

Drs. Phillip and Carolyn Cowan of UC Berkeley were retained, as part of the team of principal investigators, to conduct the evaluation of the project. They in turn retained the data manager, Mitra Rahman. In FFY 2004 and 2005, the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data has been on-going. Quantitative data is obtained on a regular basis as each site submits a monthly report that addresses, among other things, the number of prospective participants that have been screened and interviewed, and the number of participants in each of the three groups. The UC Berkeley data manager has regular conference calls with the data managers at each site to do problem solving and disseminate information with regard to data collection. Data collection forms and written instructions have been given to the sites in order to facilitate standardization in the collection of study data.

Qualitative data is obtained through interviews with participants, project and county staff and with members of the California Team, which consists of the principal investigators and the CDSS/OCAP project staff.

Objective

To implement the SFI Study at five FRCs.

Activities/Results

The project was implemented at five sites:

- Sacramento County: The Mutual Assistance Network
- San Luis Obispo County: S.A.F.E Family Resource Center
- Santa Cruz County: La Manzana Community Resource Center
- Tulare County: Lindsay Healthy Start
- Yuba County: Olivehurst Family Resource Center

From the beginning of the project in October 2003, to the end of January 2005, approximately 304 couples and individuals have participated in either the control group or the fathers or couples groups. It is estimated that 300 couples and individuals will successfully complete the groups by the time the initiative ends on September 30, 2006.

In February 2005, the State and Sacramento County reached an agreement that allows the County to provide alternate services to fathers in the neighborhood of the FRC. This agreement ended the County's formal participation in the SFI study. The four remaining sites will ensure that 300 couples and individuals successfully complete the groups by September 30, 2006.

Objective

Develop and deliver an effective training and technical assistance program to the five implementing sites.

In addition to the contract with UC Berkeley for the evaluation services, the CDSS/OCAP entered into a contract with Connecticut Department of Mental Health and

Addiction Services to develop and deliver a comprehensive training and technical assistance program for county and family resource center staff at the five SFI Study sites. The services of Drs. Kyle and Marsha Pruett of the Yale University Medical School are retained through this contract. As part of the team of principal investigators, they provide technical assistance to the sites in terms of clinical and educational issues. Dr. Marsha Pruett conducts the group leaders' and case managers' teleconferences that are held at least once a month.

Through the Strategies Family Support Training Centers, an OCAP grant funded project, a listserv is provided to enhance ongoing communications between the sites, the principal investigators, the data manager and OCAP staff and to provide peer support for the five SFI Study sites.

The Puetts, the Cowans, and Ms. Rahman provided technical assistance and training to staff of the five sites during "all project meetings" which were held in January, April and October 2004. Strategies staff plan, organize and facilitate "all project" meetings. The October meeting included a session on case management practice that was a condensed version of the two day Strategies training. The most recent "all project" meeting took place in April 2005.

Citizen Review Panels

Program Description

The function of Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) is to evaluate the effectiveness with which State and local child protection agencies are discharging their responsibilities by examining child protection policies, practices and procedures, and making recommendations to County and State governments for improvement. CRPs bring together citizens, former consumers of services, foster parents, CWS professionals, Court Appointed Special Advocates, children's attorney's, educators, representatives of tribal governments, representatives of county agencies such as public health, and mental health, and law enforcement officials among others to examine and review these policies, practices, and procedures.

Objective

To implement a new Statewide panel by October 1, 2004, to examine the policies practices and procedures of the Statewide CWS agency.

Activities/Results

Twenty-two Statewide Panel members were selected by October 2004. The membership draws from child advocates, parent leaders, tribal leaders, foundation officers, county mental health managers, law enforcement, county counsels, alcohol and drug program administrators, foster parents, foster youth, social workers, probation officers, and the Judicial Council. In November 2004, the CDSS/OCAP staff conducted two introductory conference calls (to include all panel members and accommodate their schedules) that oriented the new panel to its duties and responsibilities. The arrival of a

new director in December 2004, and the subsequent transition period meant that plans for a January 2005 meeting were postponed. A face-to-face meeting of the full panel occurred in April 2005. The CRP members discussed their roles and responsibilities and developed an organizational structure for achieving panel duties. The CDSS/OCAP staff presented the CWS System Improvements, the Title IV-B Children and Family Services Plan. Members were asked to participate in the review of the Annual and Progress Services Report for FFY 2004-2005.

Objective

To have at least three panels operating in the State each year.

Activities /Results

A new funding cycle began for the county CRPs on October 1, 2004. Alameda, Kern, and San Mateo Counties were funded. With the addition of the Statewide panel, this brings the number of CRPs in California to four.

Objective

To provide general information to the public on the CRPs and to allow for public input.

Activities/Results

Napa and Kern counties presented findings and or recommendations to their respective boards of Supervisors at meetings that were open to the public. Napa has posted its latest report on the national CRP website. San Mateo County has a description of the CRP and contact information on the county website.

The CDSS/OCAP CRP website has undergone several revisions and it will be completed by the end of May 2005.

Objective

To enhance the training opportunities that are available to panel members.

Activities/Results

A new training and technical assistance consultant was hired at the beginning of the new funding cycle. The consultant was required to have a background in the area of the changing focus of the child welfare system in California due to child welfare system improvement, in order to facilitate the county panel's understanding.

Objective

To ensure that the recommendations of the county CRPs are reviewed at the Statewide level.

Activities/Results

The recommendations from the three county panels, which are contained in their reports for FFY 2004, were sent to the Statewide panel in April 2005. When recommendations fall into the purview of other State departments, the CDSS/OCAP will work with these departments and coordinate the review process.

In keeping with the Stakeholders' recommendation that prevention be incorporated into all aspects of the CWS system, the Statewide CRP will now provide the function that was provided previously by the Prevention Advisory Council (PAC). This holistic approach fulfills the Stakeholder finding that prevention must be the foundation for CWS system improvement and not a separate or stand alone activity. This will also meet the requirements of the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program, by providing input to the CDSS/OCAP on community-based, prevention-focused family resource and support programs. The focus of the PAC has been on the development and expansion of family resource and family support collaboratives and networks comprised of community-based, county and state level organizations and agencies service children and families. In its advisory role, the Statewide CRP will integrate a primary prevention/early intervention perspective into its review of Statewide CWS policies, practices and procedures.

Objective

To maintain compliance with all federal requirements regarding CRPs.

Activities/Results

AB 2873 was passed in FFY 2004 to fulfill the federal mandate, with regard to CRPs, that required specific confidentiality provisions and civil penalties for violations of these provisions be incorporated into the statutes of States that receive CAPTA funding.

Child Fatality Analysis

At the request of its' Legal Division, the CDSS coordinates case reviews of child fatalities suspected of resulting from child abuse or neglect and which have prior or current involvement with the CWS agency. The CDSS completes Child Fatality Reviews in coordination with county child welfare service departments and evaluates the findings to ensure regulatory compliance and identify trends and/or deficiencies in the administration of child welfare services. The child death data collected from these reviews is used to propose, develop and facilitate child welfare policy and practice oriented towards the prevention of child fatalities.

The CDSS has completed analysis of 51 child fatality cases for calendar year 2004 and January-February 2005. This analysis is focused on the 51 cases reported to and reviewed by the CDSS and does not reflect the entirety of child fatalities in California. The information presented below is a summation of our child fatality analysis.

The cause of death for the 51 child fatalities:

- 14 (28 percent) accidental
- 10 (20 percent) confirmed abuse
- 4 (8 percent) suspected abuse
- 15 (30 percent) natural causes
- 1 (1 percent) suicide
- 3 (5 percent) homicide
- 4 (8 percent) undetermined

Further analysis of these cases determined that 90 percent of the children who died in 2004 were under the age of three, with 53 percent of those deaths comprised of children aged one and under. Additional findings include:

1. **Fourteen of the 51** child death cases were placements in out-of-home care. Of this 14, one was accidental, two were confirmed abuse (one - age 1 in a relative placement and the other - age 2 in a foster care placement), one suspected abuse, seven natural causes, two homicide and one undetermined.
2. In **49 of the 51** death cases, there were no findings related to practice issues, i.e., assessments of safety or risk, relative assessment background check requirements not being met, or noncompliance with regulatory requirements. In two cases, it could not be determined if the county was in compliance or not.

Resulting Programmatic Efforts to Identify and Prevent Child Fatalities

Although the initial findings related to county compliance with state regulations governing the administration of child welfare programs did not show significant trends the CDSS continues in its efforts to improve child safety and reduction of child abuse related deaths through prevention and program oversight.

The CDSS' prevention activities over the last year include continued participation on the State Child Death Review Council (State Council). In an effort to better understand the issues with collecting accurate fatality data, the CDSS, through the State Council, participates in an annual data reconciliation audit with partnering State agencies including the California Department of Health Services (DHS) the California Department of Justice (DOJ). There are four Statewide databases - Child Abuse Central Index (CACI), Homicide Files, Vital Statistics and CWS/CMS - used in the reconciliation audit. The results are published in an annual report issued by the State Council. The information is also used to obtain a better understanding of the data trends and for more focused prevention campaigns.

The CDSS is collaborating with the DHS on a Child Maltreatment Surveillance test project funded by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Under this project, CDSS child death data derived from CWS/CMS is being compared with other official State data for purposes of detecting child abuse and neglect deaths. Other State data files are those mentioned in the paragraph above.

The CDSS also contracted with the Interagency Council on Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) for county child death review team training. Last year, ICAN provided training to over 100 local child death review team members in five regions. The training provided information to team members on properly identifying child abuse and neglect related deaths and review team processes.

The CDSS continues to promote the Safely Surrendered Baby media campaign. This campaign seeks to inform women that they can safely surrender their baby to a designated place without fear of criminal prosecution. In the last year, there were 30 safely surrendered babies.

The CDSS has a child advocate that sits on the State Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Council. The California SIDS program, under the direction of the DHS, Maternal and Child Health Branch, was developed to help the many individuals in California affected by a SIDS death. Services are offered to the public; medical and child care professionals in an effort to reduce the emotional suffering of SIDS families, improve the knowledge and skills of people who interact with SIDS families, increase public awareness and knowledge of SIDS, and collect and monitor data and encourage medical research on SIDS.

Programmatically, the CDSS has established and administered a Relative Approval Monitoring Process based on approval standards outlined in Assembly Bill (AB) 1695, Chapter 653, and Statutes of 2001. The CDSS utilizes CWS/CMS as a tool in reviewing county relative approval processes and documentation to ensure that all relative/non-relative extended family member placements meet the AB 1695 approval standards for safety. The Relative Approval Monitoring Process provides a systemic approach utilizing a statistically valid case review to ensure that primary caregivers and other adults living in the home are uniformly initially assessed and periodically reassessed to determine whether they meet all licensing/approval requirements designed to ensure safety of children in relative placement.

Pursuant to State Law (Assembly Bill 636, Steinberg, Ch. 678, Statutes of 2001), effective January 2004, a new Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability System began operation in California. The new system, referred to as the California-Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), was developed in accordance with the provisions of WIC §10601.2 and focuses primarily on measuring outcomes in safety, permanence and child and family well-being.

The CDSS has worked with counties to implement the Family to Family initiative. Family to Family is in various phases of implementation throughout California. Partners under the California initiative include the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the CDSS. Families are supported by this initiative by improving safety of the placement and by having families participate in the Team Decision-Making (TDM) process which include the child. As of March 2005, there are 11 counties holding TDMs - Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Monterey, Orange, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus. The remaining 13 counties are in the process of planning, training staff, and working with community partners to prepare for TDM roll out.

Currently, 24 of the 58 counties participate in the Family to Family Initiative. Approximately, 88 percent of the 85,286 children in child welfare supervised foster care in California live in a Family to Family county (data from December 2004). The

foundations and the CDSS provide technical assistance to counties with their implementation through expert consultants.

Criminal Background Checks

Requirements for criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relatives residing in the household (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii)) are included as part of the CDSS' 24 Assurances which are signed by the Governor in order for the State to receive the state child abuse and neglect grant from the federal government.

Specifically, criminal record checks for foster parents, including relative and nonrelative extended family member (NREFM) foster caregivers, and other adults residing in the household, are required by Section 1522(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B) of the Health and Safety Code and Sections 89219(a) and 89319 of Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). These criminal records checks are done through the California Department of Justice (DOJ) which checks the criminal record history in the State of California and nationally through the FBI.

Agency Adoptions Program statute (Family Code Section 8712) and regulations (CCR Title 22, Div. 2, Chapter 3, Section 35047) governing adoption proceedings for foster children also require a criminal records check through the California DOJ in all cases, and through the FBI in specified circumstances, for the adoptive applicants and all other adults residing in the household.

Welfare and Institutions Code (W&IC) Section 309(d) requires the assessment that is done before a child is released into the temporary custody of a relative or NREFM to include "a consideration of the results of a criminal records check and allegations of prior child abuse or neglect concerning the relatives and other adults in the home." W&IC Section 361.4 requires a state and federal criminal record check and a check of prior abuse or neglect allegations for all persons over 18 in the home prior to placing a child in a relative home. W&IC Section 362.7 requires the home of a NREFM to meet the standards set forth for the licensing of foster family homes.

**Budget for Federal Fiscal Year
2004 and 2005 Basic State Grants
(Estimated)**

Activities		FFY 2004	FFY2005	Total
Projects	(90 percent)	\$2,235,303	\$3,031,029	\$5,266,332
Administrative Costs*	(10 percent)	\$ 248,367	\$336,781	\$585,148
Total		\$2,483,670	\$3,367,810	\$5,851,480

* Administrative costs include:

Staff	\$ 216,080	\$ 293,000	\$509,080
Travel	\$ 32,287	\$43,781	\$76,068

State of California Department of Social Services

Office of Child Abuse Prevention

**FIFTH REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA
CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS**

OCTOBER 2003 - MARCH 2005

June 2005

State of California

Since 1999, California has been required to have at least three Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) in operation, in order to receive its grant for child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment programs under the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). Since that time, the California Department of Social Services' Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) has provided the funding and technical support necessary to ensure that at least three counties operate CRPs and that there is a body that functions as a Statewide CRP by reviewing the policies, practices and procedures of California's CWS System.

This report covers the activities of California's panels for FFY 2004 and for the first six months of FFY 2005. The report contains discussions of future directions that address that last six months of FFY 2005 and FFY2006.

State and County Citizen Review Panels

During the 2003/2004 legislative session, the CDSS drafted legislation (Assembly Bill 2873) to bring California into compliance with Section 5106a(c)(B) of the United States Code that states:

- That staff and members of a panel shall not disclose to any person or government official any identifying information about any specific child protection case with respect to which the panel is provide information,
- That panels shall not make public other information unless authorized by State statute and,
- That each State that establishes a panel shall establish civil sanctions for a violation of the confidentiality provisions above.

AB 2873 was passed and chaptered into law as Section 18973 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

County Citizen Review Panels

Objective

Ensure that there are a minimum of three county CRPs in operation at all times.

Kern, Napa, and San Mateo Counties completed the second CRP funding cycle which began on October 1, 2002 and ended on September 30, 2004. The request for letters of interest to operate a county CRP for the third funding cycle (October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2006) was issued twice. Four counties applied and three were funded.

These three counties are Alameda, Kern, and San Mateo. A fourth county is receiving technical assistance that is designed to refine and clarify its proposed work plan so that it reflects activities that comprise a focused review process. Funding of this fourth panel is contingent upon the successful outcome of this refinement process.

For Kern, Napa and San Mateo Counties, a report on their activities, findings and recommendations along with a discussion of their future directions for FFY 2005, can be found under the specific county section below.

Objective

Provide training and on-going technical assistance to the three county CRPs.

Strategies Region II, which is implemented by Interface Children Family Services in Ventura County, is retained by the OCAP to provide technical assistance to the county CRPs. One of the OCAPs' requirements was that the new consultant, for the third funding cycle, have experience with CWS System Improvements at the county level. This is important as county panels are beginning to review the effectiveness of their child welfare service departments in implementing policies, practices, and procedures that support these departments in meeting the goals and objectives of the System Improvement Plans that are being prepared as part of CWS System Improvements.

A procedure for obtaining technical assistance was presented to the new panels at an orientation/training meeting held in January 2005. The OCAP is formalizing this procedure to address a situation in which informal requests for feedback on technical assistance went unanswered only to be addressed at a much later date in the annual report. This made it impossible to ensure that appropriate assistance was provided in a timely manner. The new procedure, which requires requests for technical assistance to be in writing, should facilitate the provision of timely and effective technical assistance.

Objective

To review and respond to panel recommendations.

The recommendations that are contained in the annual reports of the three county panels were reviewed for comment by the Statewide CRP. As part of the review, the recommendations were evaluated by staff of the California Department of Social Services and by Statewide panel members to determine whether they have implications for statewide policy or for other California Counties. The CDSS will also respond to the recommendations and if indicated, forward recommendations to relevant State agencies.

The Statewide Panel's feedback to CDSS raised the issue as to whether county recommendations that address confidentiality and access to client records have implications for statewide policy. In keeping with panel feedback, CDSS acknowledges that counties should handle issues regarding confidentiality and access to juvenile court

records at the local level. CDSS staff will explore the various options including the possibility of amending either Section 827 or Section 18973 of the Welfare and Institutions Code so that it is stated in California statute that Citizen Review Panels have access to juvenile case files.

The Statewide Citizen Review Panel

Objective

To ensure that there is a review body that examines the State level CWS System.

The new Statewide CRP, which grew out of the CWS Stakeholders' Group, was convened by two teleconferences in November 2004. It had its first face to face meeting in April 2005.

Background

In 2000, the California State legislature passed AB 1740 which established the CWS Stakeholders Group and charged them with reviewing the existing CWS system and making recommendations for its improvement and future design. The group was comprised of individuals with expertise, experience, and first hand knowledge of the CWS system and they examined its policies, procedures, and practices.

The Stakeholders convened from May 2000 to fall 2003. Their findings and recommendations are contained in a series of reports and these findings and recommendations have been incorporated into the Child and Family Services Title IV-B plan and the State's Program Improvement Plan which was developed in response to the findings of the Federal Child and Family Services Review.

While the Stakeholders were in existence, they functioned as the Statewide CRP. Since the Stakeholders were to perform specific functions and disband when their mission was complete, there was a need to continue the functions of a statewide panel once they had fulfilled their responsibilities.

The Stakeholders themselves had a desire to continue their advisory function to the CDSS upon the completion of their mission. They wanted to continue to examine the policies, procedures and practices of the current child welfare system, and they wanted to generate support for the changes in the system that is being brought about by their recommendations. To this end, they joined with other CDSS partners to form the Champions for Children.

The Champions for Children met for the first time in September 2003, to continue their dialogue around the State child welfare system and to expand support for the reform and improvement of child welfare services in California; however, in November 2003, there was a change of administrations which resulted in the departure of the Director of

the CDSS and some key managers whose responsibilities had a direct impact upon child welfare services and the plans and initiatives that had been designed to improve them. As a result of these changes, the Champions for Children were put on hold.

In summer and fall 2004, the CDSS began the process of convening a new Statewide CRP that could support the functions of the Champions for Children. Drawing upon the membership of the Stakeholders and other groups, persons with expertise in child welfare services were asked to serve on the Panel, while some organizations with such expertise were asked to recommend persons for membership on the Panel. Panel membership (see Appendix A) includes representatives from Court Appointed Special Advocates; parents; Tribal Governments; foster youth; the associations that represent mental health directors, county superintendents of schools, county counsels, foster parents, county alcohol and drug directors, chief probation officers, and social workers. Also, represented are the Foundation Consortium and several foundations, the Youth Law Center, and the Judicial Council of California.

In keeping with the Stakeholders' recommendation that prevention be incorporated into all aspects of the CWS system, the Statewide CRP will now provide the function previously held by the Prevention Advisory Council. This holistic approach fulfills the Stakeholder finding that prevention must be the foundation of CWS System Improvements and not a separate or stand-alone activity. This will also meet the requirements of the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program, with providing input to the CDSS on community-based, prevention-focused family resource and support programs. The focus of the PAC has been on the development and expansion of family resource and family support collaboratives and networks comprised of community-based, county and State level organizations and agencies serving children and families. In its advisory role, the Statewide CRP will integrate a primary prevention/early intervention perspective to its review of Statewide CWS policies, practices, and procedures.

Future Directions

On April 12, 2005, the Statewide CRP met in Sacramento. Presentations made to the panel addressed:

- The purpose and function of both the Statewide and county panels
- CWS System Improvements
- The PIP and the Outcomes and Accountability Act (AB 636)
- The Comprehensive Safety Assessment
- Permanency and Youth Transitions
- Differential Response
- The California Title IV-B Plan 2005-2009

The Panel reviewed a report prepared by the Permanency and Youth Transitions Workgroup. Also, the panel members read California's Title IV-B Plan for 2005-2009 as background and preparation for its review of the 2005 APSR which was completed in May 2005. The Statewide CRP is responsible for responding to recommendations

made by the county CRPs; therefore, the Panel members reviewed and commented on the recommendations made last year by the county panels in terms of any possible implications for other counties and for statewide policies, practices and procedures. Their comments are contained in Appendix B of this report. Recommendations made this year will be responded to within six months of receiving the annual report from each of the county panels.

A four-member steering committee was formed. It will convene to develop options for a permanent structure for the Statewide Panel and for the terms of membership. Panel members discussed their central focus and decided that it could include a review of the CDSS' compliance with AB 636 or with part of the Title IV-B plan. No decision was made during the meeting regarding the Panel's central focus.

The draft APSR for Federal Fiscal Year 2005 was e-mailed to the Panel membership during the latter part of April with a request that comments be submitted in writing to the CDSS. The CRP submitted comments on the APSR in May 2005, and on May 18, 2005, a teleconference with the Statewide CRP and representatives was held to discuss their comments on the APSR as well as comments on the recommendations from the county CRPs.

Based on the comments received from the CRP concerning the APSR, the CDSS developed an executive summary for inclusion in the APSR; elaborated on the role of the State Interagency Team; and provided clarification regarding various areas within the APSR.

At the June 27, 2005 meeting, the Statewide CRP determined their governance structure, decided that they will conduct a focused review on the three safety objectives in the PIP including disproportionality, and requested that the CDSS provide them with a wide variety of data, presentations on various topics related to their review and county assessment forms related to CWS. The next meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2005.

Kern County

County Information

Kern County is located in California's Central Valley. While its 2003 population was approximately 713,087, it is the largest county in California in terms of its physical size. About 32 percent of its population is under the age of 18. In SFY 2003/2004, there were 24,304 emergency response referrals. In August 2004, there were approximately 3,857 children in foster care.

Caucasians (non-Hispanic/Latino) comprise roughly 50 percent of the Kern County population, while persons of Hispanic/Latino background represent about 33 percent of the population. People who reported being "some other race" were 23.2 percent of the population, while Blacks/African Americans represented six percent. Persons who reported being "two or more races" were 4.1 percent of the population, Asians were 3.4, American Indians and Alaska Natives were 1.5 percent and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders were less than one percent.

In 2000, persons born outside of the United States accounted for 16.9 percent of the population, and 33.4 percent spoke a language other than English at home. Sixty-eight percent of the population 25 years and older has graduated from high school and 13.5 percent have bachelor's degrees.

Kern's population is at an economic disadvantage relative to the State as a whole. Kern's median household income is \$35,446 compared to \$47,493 for California. The per capita income for Kern is \$15,760 and the percentage of persons below the poverty line is approximately 20.8 percent. The figures for the State of California are \$22,711 and 14.2 percent.

Panel Activities

The death of a child, who was under CPS' jurisdiction, at the hands of his birth parent and a State Senator's recommendation that the State of California undertake the operation of Kern County's CWS system led the Board of Supervisors to ask the Kern County Panel to review Kern's County's CPS system with an emphasis upon child deaths. This was the focus of the Kern County Panel in FFY 2004.

The Panel was asked to address the child welfare system and the various county agencies and committees that impact this system to determine whether there can be:

- Increased collaboration among these entities
- Timely and consistent reporting to the Board of Supervisors on the part of these agencies and committees
- Immediate feedback on causes and corrective measures when there is a child death

- An ombudsman who can intervene in specific cases,
- An expanded CRP that includes representatives from law enforcement and education
- Analysis of the impact of the CWS confidentiality laws on the reporting of information on specific cases to the Board of Supervisors and the public
- The adaptation of a proactive, prevention oriented approach to preventing child deaths.

The Panel's review of the County's response to the death of a child (who was under CPS' jurisdiction) at the hands of a parent, led to recommendations that:

- Outlined an approach to child deaths that involved Department of Human Services' Internal Audit Division, the county's Child Death Review Team, the Board of Supervisors, the County Coroner, and the Child Abuse Prevention Council;
- Encouraged the Department of Human Services to develop and implement a "formal, consistent grievance process/procedure that is shared with clients up front" and encouraged the field staff for elected officials and the staff of the Board of Supervisors to continue to act in an ombudsman role;
- Committed the CRP to work to include among its membership representatives from law enforcement and education who are knowledgeable about CPS; and,
- Addressed the need for the County to explore confidentiality laws that govern child welfare as they impact:
 - Information that can be released about specific cases
 - Role of an ombudsmen
 - Information that can be released by the media, such as identifying information about a specific case, when governmental bodies are prohibited from doing so
 - Relationship between the County and Community Care Licensing (the Branch of the CDSS that licenses and monitors group homes, foster family agencies and if there is no arrangement with the county, foster homes)
 - Law that requires counties to release to the public information on near fatalities.

The approach to child deaths as outlined above and the statement regarding the need for more analysis and development of confidentiality provisions will form the basis of recommendations that will be presented to the Statewide CRP in April 2005 for its review and comment. Kern's approach to child deaths may have implications for child death review protocols so that the Council can assess the implications that these recommendations may have for state and county child death review teams. Recommendations from the Kern County CRP are outlined in more detail in Appendix B.

Future Directions:

In Federal Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006 the Kern County Panel will utilize a team approach to evaluate the effectiveness of the local child welfare service agency in terms of its efforts to:

- Secure the safety of children identified through CPS referrals as at risk or abuse, neglect, or abandonment. The Panel's Team 1 will examine how the CWS system is handling those cases involving a substantiated allegation of maltreatment within 12 months after an earlier allegation of abuse or neglect has been substantiated.
- Improve safety and permanency outcomes for abused, neglected, or abandoned children through improved (1) case planning, monitoring, implementation and (2) decision-making with respect to reunification and case discharge. The Panel's Team 2 will examine how the CWS system is handling those cases involving children who re-enter foster care within 12-24 months after the child had been reunified with his/her parent. Team 2 may narrow its focus to children ages 0 to 5.
- Improve well-being and permanency outcomes for older dependents emancipating from child welfare supervised foster care, with particular attention to increasing the number of youth/young adults who leave foster care prepared to transition to adulthood. The Panel's Team 3 will examine how the CWS system handled and is handling those dependent youth who were/are eligible for independent living services from 2000 to 2005.
- Employ effective policies, practices and procedures that can be used to audit its own responses in those cases where a child who was previously the subject of a local CPS referral dies or suffers substantial trauma possibly as the result of caretaker abuse, neglect or abandonment. The Panel's Team 4 will examine this issue and it may also examine cases involving local dependent child whose circumstances allegedly involve serious mismanagement of their cases by the local public child welfare service system.

NAPA COUNTY

Panel Activities

Napa County is a rural county with a population of approximately 131,607 people. Population is concentrated in the Cities of Napa, American Canyon, St. Helena and Calistoga which have many of the commercial features of larger cities such as hotels, restaurants, and upscale shops that accommodate the tourist industry that has been spawned by the wine industry.

Caucasians (non Hispanic/Latino) comprise roughly 69.1 percent of the population. Hispanic/Latinos are approximately 23.7 percent. Asians comprise approximately 3 percent of the population; Black or African Americans are roughly 1.3 percent; American Indians/Alaska Natives are approximately 0.8 percent and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders are 0.2 percent.

Approximately 80.4 percent of the population aged 25 or older is comprised of high school graduates. About 26.4 percent hold bachelor's degrees. Median household income in 2000 was higher than that of the State as a whole, \$51, 738 compared to the State's \$47,493. Per capita income was also higher: Napa's was \$26,395 as compared to \$22,711 for California. Persons in Napa living below the poverty line comprise roughly 8.3 percent of the population compared to 14.2 percent for the State as a whole.

During FFY 2004, the Panel focused upon the recruitment of Hispanic/Latino members. Panel members also focused upon Child Welfare System Improvements and addressed child abuse prevention issues at the meetings that were held to facilitate this process.

The Napa County CRP made the following recommendations to its Board of Supervisors and to the State:

- The State should allocate funding to county CWS agencies in accordance with the budgetary methodology established in the Child Welfare Service (SB 2030) Study which was completed in April 2000;
- The State should provide funding to support the "Redesign" of the CWS system; and,
- There should be continued funding for Napa's Accreditation (Napa CWS agency is accredited by the Child Welfare League of America)

These recommendations will be presented to the Statewide CRP at its April 2005 meeting for its review and consideration.

Future Directions

It is possible that the Napa panel will receive funding for the last three months of FFY 2005 and through FFY 2006 pending acceptance of the submitted request for funding.

SAN MATEO COUNTY

County Profile

San Mateo County is located in the western portion of the San Francisco Bay Area, directly below the City/County of San Francisco. It is one of California's most affluent counties and as part of Silicon Valley it is home to many "high tech" firms. Many of its foreign born are highly educated professionals who are proficient in English. However, service industries employ both Americans and the foreign born who have limited skills.

San Mateo's population is approximately 697,456 people of whom approximately 23 percent are under 18. In SFY 2003-2004 there were 366 emergency response referrals and 266 children in foster care.

Caucasians (non-Hispanic/Latino) make up roughly 50 percent of the population, while persons of Hispanic/Latino origin make up 22 percent. Asians are 20 percent of the population, persons who reported being "some other race" are 10 percent, persons who reported being "two or more races" are 5.0, Blacks or African Americans are 3.5 percent, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders are 1.3 percent, and American Indians and Alaska Natives are less than 1 percent of the population.

The median household income for the County is \$70,819, per capita income is \$36,045 and the percentage of persons below the poverty line is 5.8 percent. The median household income for California is \$47,493 and the State's per capita income is \$22,711. In California, approximately 14.2 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

In FFY 2004, the San Mateo County Panel experienced a period of change and flux with the retirement of the Child and Family Services Director. Upon his retirement, the county restructured the position. The new Director is responsible only for Child and Family Services while the previous director had been responsible as well for the Self-Sufficiency and Employment Programs in the northern part of the County.

CRP members, including those who are foster parents, children's attorneys and Court Appointed Special Advocates, served on the System Improvement Plan Committees that impact re-entry into foster care. These members served as resource persons for the rest of the panel members as they examined the policies, practices and procedures that have implications for re-entry into foster care and the case files of those who re-entered.

CRP members participated in Family to Family Team Decision-Making meetings. The Family to Family initiative, which is funded by the Annie E Casey Foundation, is intended to facilitate a more responsive and integrated approach to working with the community on the part of San Mateo County's CWS system.

Team Decision-Making refers to a process by which birth families and community members participate in formulating placement decisions for dependent children. CRP members collaborated with staff of the Human Services Agency and other community members to develop policies and procedures for the implementation of Team Decision-Making sessions. They participated in the process that made Team Decision-Making mandatory for all families who have children removed from their homes and for all placement changes. Team Decision-Making is seen as a practice that can impact re-entry into foster care in a major way.

The San Mateo County Panel recommended that:

- Team Decision-Making meetings be made mandatory every time children are removed from their homes, every time they change homes in which they have been placed and every time they are reunified with their families.

The Panel considers Team Decision-Making to be a means of providing a holistic approach to the needs of families that enables its members to better handle family reunification and thus decrease the chances of re-entry. This recommendation was presented to the Statewide CRP at its April 2005 meeting.

Future Directions

During the FFY 2005, the Panel will investigate all re-entries into foster care in the county during 2003 and identify gaps in services and ways to improve the system.

ALAMEDA COUNTY

County Profile

Alameda received funding to operate a CRP for the 2004-2006 funding cycle. This is the first time that the county has operated a panel.

Alameda County is an urban county in the San Francisco Bay Area and the county seat is Oakland. Its population is approximately 1,461,030. Roughly twenty-five percent of the population is under the age of 18. For SFY 2003-2004, there were roughly 13,766 emergency response referrals. The foster care caseload is in the 5,200 range.

Caucasians (non-Hispanic/Latino) comprise approximately 41 percent of the population, while Asians make up 20 percent. Hispanics/Latinos and Blacks make up 19 and 15 percent respectively of the County's population and 8.9 percent are those who report being "of some other race." Those who are of two or more races represent 5.6 percent. American Indians and Alaska Natives make up less than one percent of the County's population. Twenty-seven percent of the population is foreign born. Eighty-two percent of those age 25 or older are high school graduates, while 35 percent have bachelors' degrees. Median household income is roughly \$55,946, per capita income is \$26,680 and 11 percent of the people live below the poverty line.

The Department of Children and Family Services/Child Abuse Prevention of the Alameda County Social Services Agency and the Interagency Children's Policy Council (ICPC) of Alameda County are working in partnership to convene and staff the CRP. The ICPC is a county sponsored collaborative of public and private agencies that was established in 1994 to improve outcomes for low income and vulnerable children and families through major interagency systems reform. A prior project of the ICPC has been implementation of the AB 1741 Youth Pilot Project that has focused on reducing out-of-home placements and the planning, development and implementation of child welfare reform activities. The membership of the ICPC includes two members of the Board of Supervisors, executives from the County Office of Education, the County's Health Care Services Agency, the Juvenile Court, Social Services and community based organizations such as CASA and those that represent foster parents and youth advocates. Law enforcement agencies are also represented on the ICPC.

Future Directions

During the 2004-2006 funding cycle, the Alameda County Panel will examine the county's policies, practices and procedures in regard to the:

- improvement of safety outcomes for children;
- improvement of permanency outcomes;
- promotion of well-being for children and families; and
- provision of family centered-services.

Alameda County began its CRP in FFY 2005 and will submit its annual report, which will contain its activities and recommendations, in November 2005.

APPENDIX A**Membership Roster
Statewide Citizen Review Panel****Statewide Citizen Review Panel Member List**

NAME	TITLE and ORGANIZATION
Robin Allen	Executive Director, California Court Appointed Special Advocates
Nancy Antoon, LCSW	Deputy Director for Child & Family Services, Trinity County Behavioral Health, California Mental Health Directors Association rep.
Bill Bettencourt	Site Leader and Consultant, Family to Family, Annie E. Casey Foundation
Mike Carll	California Parent Leadership Team (CPLT) Parent Leader, Parents Anonymous of California
Ellin Chariton	Executive Director, Orange County Dept. of Education, Division of School & Community Services, California County Superintendents Educational Services Assn.
Miryam Choca	Director, California State Strategies San Diego Division Casey Family Programs
Judith Chynoweth	Executive Director, Foundation Consortium
Kate Cleary	Executive Director, Consortium for Children
Terri Kook	Program Officer, Stuart Foundation
Pamela Maxwell	California Parent Leadership Team (CPLT) Parent Leader, Parents Anonymous of California
Francine McKinley	ICWA/Social Services Director, Mooretown Rancheria
Michelle Neumann-Ribner, LCSW, JD	Senior Deputy San Diego County Counsel, Juvenile Division, San Diego County Office of County Counsel
James Michael Owen, JD	Assistant County Counsel, Training & Litigation Division, LA County, California County Counsel Association
Cora Pearson Alternate: Velma J. Moore	California Foster Parent Association, Inc.

NAME	TITLE AND ORGANIZATION
John Phillips, MA	Program Supervisor, AOD Services, Mariposa County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrators Assn. of CA (CADPAAC) rep.
Jennifer Rodriguez	Former foster youth, California Youth Connection
Jerry Rose	Director, Yolo County Dept. of Employment and Social Services, County Welfare Directors Association
Carroll Schroeder	California Alliance of Child and Family Services
Carole Shauffer, JD, MEd	Youth Law Center
Norma Suzuki	Chief Probation Officers of California
Susan A. Taylor, PhD	National Association of Social Workers, CA Chapter
Christopher Wu, JD	Supervising Attorney, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, Judicial Council of CA-- Administrative Office of the Courts

**Kern County Citizen Review Panel
Report to the Kern County Board of Supervisors**

Overview

Like so many other California counties, Kern County has struggled with higher than average rates of child abuse and child deaths at the hands of abusers for the past decade or more. Recent cases have captured our attention and renewed our resolve to take a comprehensive look at the priority that Kern County places on protecting children from harm. It is clear that more could be done to protect our children and that flaws in the various systems that exist to protect children and vulnerable families must be addressed and fixed. The media, elected officials and the community at large are demanding that these systems – especially the Department of Human Services, our public child protective services agency – look internally and externally in an open and honest manner to pinpoint areas that need reform. Although Kern hosts several oversight groups that study and make recommendations about child abuse and deaths, the sense of urgency must be raised and the flow of information must be increased so that policy-makers have direction on ways to reform the system.

While lack of funding (especially for prevention and early intervention) is often cited as the primary cause for flaws within various public service systems, this report will focus on the myriad of issues that the Kern Citizen Review Panel (CRP) believes can be addressed aside from the issue of increased funding. That said, the CRP pleads with elected officials to use their influence to increase funding focused on prevention and early intervention services. Kern County must do a better job of leveraging funding so that we draw down all available funding for child abuse treatment and prevention. The CAO's office should be encouraged to play a lead role in helping to find creative ways to leverage funding by working with key County departments that provide services to children and families.

On March 16, 2004, the Board of Supervisors received a report from the CAO outlining existing groups that provide some form of oversight of Child Protective Services (CPS). The Board expressed appreciation for the report and the work of these existing groups and asked the Kern CRP to examine their referral and report back to the board on the following:

- a) How can Kern bring the work of the various oversight committees together to produce more collaborative results and reports?
- b) How can we raise the sense of urgency among these groups so that the Board receives timely, thorough reports throughout the year, not just occasionally?
- c) After the death of a child, can the CRP or some other group report back to the Board immediately regarding the causes for the death and what could be done differently in the future?

- d) Can the CRP or another existing group serve in an “ombudsman” role to intervene in certain cases so that a positive resolution is achieved?
- e) Would the CRP consider adding representatives from law enforcement and education?
- f) How do confidentiality laws affect Kern’s oversight of CPS and reporting back to the Board and the public regarding specific cases?
- g) Finally, how can Kern be more proactive in preventing child deaths? How can we focus current oversight activities to be more prevention-focused?

Citizen Review Panel Recommendations Regarding the 3/16/04 Board Referral

The Citizen Review Panel (CRP) met for four hours on Monday, April 12, 2004 and for two hours on May 10, 2004 to discuss the Board referral and to develop this initial report.

Board Referral Issue #1:

How can the various oversight groups be more collaborative, accept responsibility for increasing the urgency of their work and ensure that the Board and public receive timely, thorough reports that include both short-term and long-term recommendations?

CRP Discussion:

Kern County currently operates one internal oversight committee and two formal external oversight committees:

- 1) Dept. of Human Services’ Internal Audit Division (internal)
- 2) Kern County Child Death Review Team (external)
- 3) Kern County Citizen Review Panel (external)

In addition, the Kern Child Abuse Prevention Council is charged with outreach and public education geared towards the prevention of child abuse. Finally, the Kern County Grand Jury provides somewhat of an oversight role in that it has investigated issues related to the protection of children and has developed recommendations in its annual report when appropriate.

The Citizen Review Panel is clearly charged by federal law with making strategic policy recommendations, utilizing focus groups, staff interviews, case files and other information to help them understand how services are provided and to compare the actual practice of the Department to the policies and procedures that are supposed to be followed. As per federal law, CRP members explore local policies, procedures and actual practices relating to the provision of child protective services in order to evaluate the degree to which our local CPS system is effectively discharging its child protection responsibilities.

All of these groups release some type of report on a periodic basis; however it is clear

that the frequency of these reports does not meet the current needs of the Board of Supervisors and other policy-makers.

CRP Recommendations:

- 1) The Department of Human Services' Internal Audit Division's investigations, evaluations, recommendations for corrective action, if any, and departmental response should be reviewed by the CRP as part of its work in evaluating the degree to which DHS is effectively discharging its child protection responsibilities. This review is within the federal mandate of the CRP and, to that extent, we can and will provide feedback regarding the effectiveness of current audit mechanisms. Because the Board of Supervisors will receive a copy of the CRP's reports, the Board will be in a position to assess the functioning of this internal audit mechanism;
- 2) The Department of Human Services' Internal Audit Division should share with the Kern Child Death Review Team the results of every investigation involving the death of a child resulting from child abuse or neglect. The community might then be better assured that these internal investigations are reviewed by outside and independent expertise. Additionally, access to this internal information will allow external organizations to consider the Department's experience and conclusions when addressing policy issues;
- 3) The Kern Child Death Review Team should serve as the external oversight committee that immediately investigates every child death resulting from abuse or neglect and provide immediate feedback. The Child Death Review Team may decide that the entire team can perform this function or may instead develop a sub-committee, or "hot team" of experts who can investigate the causes of death and what might be done differently in the future. Results of any "hot team" investigation should be shared with the Board of Supervisors and the Citizen Review Panel, as well as other appropriate oversight groups.
- 4) The Board of Supervisors and the public should receive a report following each child abuse death or near fatality from DHS and the Child Death Review Team as soon as possible (within a matter of days, not weeks or months). It should be noted that this may be delayed in instances where the Coroner cannot determine a cause of death and/or is waiting for toxicology / lab results, hospital records, etc. The Board of Supervisors is encouraged to work with the Coroner's Office to determine how results of death can be expedited so information is received in a more timely manner. This may include, for example, asking the District Attorney to give priority to child abuse deaths when performing lab tests, toxicology reports, etc.;
- 5) The Child Death Review Team should provide semi-annual reports to the Board of Supervisors, highlighting those deaths with prior Child Protective Services' involvement. Over the past couple of years the State of California was supposed to have prepared reports for release to the public. Since this has not occurred, Kern's Child Death Review Team has taken back that responsibility and will continue reporting information at the local level. The Child Death Review Team should also include the level of CPS involvement in each child death case that they analyze so that our community has a good understanding of deaths that occurred where CPS was involved.

- 6) The Kern Child Abuse Prevention Council should continue its advocacy and public education campaigns based on information gleaned from the various oversight groups. Kern Child Abuse Prevention Council is currently funded to do this activity, and they are encouraged to continue to make child abuse prevention education and outreach a priority.
- 7) The DHS Director and the Board of Supervisors should increase communication by holding frequent meetings to look into priority issues using a multi-agency approach;
- 8) DHS should consider resurrecting the internal Quality Assurance Division to promote continuous improvement in all DHS divisions. Quality Assurance was once in place however was disbanded due to lack of funding.

Issues for further consideration:

- 1) DHS should provide the protocol of what they consider to be a “high profile” case. In other words, what are the criteria that drive the decision to have the Internal Audit Division review a case? Is it a formal process or is it arbitrary? This would help identify those cases appropriate for scrutiny by one or more external agencies. Additionally, County Counsel should provide a comprehensive interpretation of the various confidentiality restrictions as well as specific information about what can and cannot be released as part of these reports and to whom.

Board Referral Issue #2:

Can the CRP or another existing group serve in an “ombudsman” role to intervene in certain cases so that a positive resolution is achieved?

CRP Discussion:

The CRP believes that setting up a separate “ombudsman” (individual or group) may not be feasible, although the panel also believes that existing groups already perform some of these functions and can continue to do so.

An “ombudsman” could potentially be asked to intervene in active cases by members of the public who have had CPS intervention in their lives and believe it is unwarranted. The “ombudsman” could also potentially be asked to intervene by members of the public who believe CPS should be involved in someone’s life but is not. The CRP believes establishing an independent “ombudsman” is problematic for the following reasons:

- A) The CRP cannot take on the responsibility of serving in an ombudsman role as the role of the CRP is already defined by federal law. Additionally, the CRP believes that, in general, only the Department of Human Services, Law Enforcement agencies, those persons directly involved in the case, and/or the courts have the authority to act in matters involving an ongoing investigation of child abuse or neglect or a child protective proceeding. However, the law does provide a mechanism for any interested person to challenge the

decision of DHS not to take formal protective action with regard to a child thought to be at risk. At the state level, there is an ombudsman for foster children that can act at the local level. Also, all children who are made dependents of the court because of abuse and neglect are given guardians ad litem in the form of legal counsel. Finally, at the local level, there are formal resources within DHS to assist foster parents and relative caregivers. Such assistance may include advocacy at the case level and at the systems level.

- B) The CRP's current understanding of confidentiality laws is that they would prohibit an "ombudsman" from releasing any specific information to any members of the public. For example, if a concerned resident believes that CPS is not doing enough in a specific case, the "ombudsman" would not be able to report any specifics about what is actually being done.
- C) According to the California Department of Social Services, the Napa County Citizen Review Panel has tried to take on this role in the past with unfavorable results. In addition to taking attention away from the true charge of the Napa CRP, Napa panel members have been frustrated by their lack of ability to truly intervene in active cases since they do not really have the authority to change the course of an ongoing investigation.

CRP Recommendations:

- 1) The Kern County Department of Human Services should study the feasibility of implementing a formal, consistent grievance process/procedure that is shared with clients up front. Kern County Mental Health has a formal grievance process that may serve as an excellent model. Please note issues for further consideration below as the development of a formal grievance process must be well thought out before implementation
- 2) The field staff working for elected officials, including the staff of the Board of Supervisors, often acts in an "ombudsman" role and should continue in this role. Members of the public who want help navigating the county system of services usually call their Board representative for assistance, and it makes sense to use the leverage and influence of each Board member to expedite issues that are of serious concern to their constituents.

Issues for further consideration:

- 1) County Counsel's interpretation of the scope of various confidentiality restrictions is important, because it will help us understand the specific information that can or cannot be released by an individual / group serving in an "ombudsman" role.
- 2) The development of a formal grievance process at DHS could be problematic. Issues to consider include: a) confidentiality laws most likely will prohibit DHS from releasing any information about a particular case to anyone who is not a client. Grievances may come from people who are not clients of DHS and therefore can not be included in any discussion about specific cases; b) an internal grievance process

must be coupled with an advocate who can help those filing a grievance through the process; c) The CRP believes there is already some type of grievance process in DHS that could be amended or adjusted to better meet clients' needs; d) some decisions made that may trigger a grievance are not decisions made by DHS but rather the courts, law enforcement and/or other agencies and systems.

Board Referral Issue #3:

Would the CRP consider adding representatives from law enforcement and K-12 education?

CRP Discussion:

The CRP appreciates the perspectives that representatives from these two stakeholder groups would bring to the process, although they also point out that both groups are represented on Kern's Child Death Review Team.

CRP Recommendations:

- 1) The CRP will work with law enforcement and education to identify individuals who have a working knowledge of CPS and expand the CRP membership to include representatives from law enforcement and K-12 education.

Board Referral Issue #4:

How do confidentiality laws affect Kern's oversight of CPS and reporting back to the Board and the public regarding specific cases? How can we better address the issue of confidentiality and the laws governing the release of client-specific information?

CRP Discussion:

The CRP believes the issue of confidentiality is one of the most important issues to address when considering how to improve oversight of all CPS systems, ours included. While confidentiality laws seem to be fairly specific, it appears that there are multiple – and sometimes differing – interpretations of confidentiality laws by various stakeholders including the media, elected officials, agency staff, state / federal agency staff, and the public at large. The CRP hopes that County Counsel can provide a definitive interpretation of the scope of various confidentiality restrictions that helps 1) to reduce conflicting positions; and 2) to provide concrete, specific guidance to those who seek to acquire or divulge information pertaining to child abuse and neglect cases. We hope that such legal assistance and education will put to rest accusations of “hiding behind confidentiality.”

CRP Recommendations:

The CRP asks County Counsel to provide a comprehensive ruling on the legal restrictions involving the various issues of confidentiality that may arise in child abuse and neglect cases, including the following specific issues:

- A) What specific information can be released about individual cases? Who can disclose such information and to whom may they disclose it? The CRP believes there is an exception in disclosing information about child fatalities or near fatalities. If this is the case, what information about the case may be legally disclosed, by whom and to whom? Who has ultimate authority to make a final determination about confidentiality in child abuse / death cases? Is it County Counsel? The State? The Federal government? (Note: The CRP believes it is important that, in those areas where the law is “gray”, the positions we take with respect to confidentiality be consistent with the positions of the state and federal government for a variety of reasons – those authorities ultimately have jurisdiction over Citizen Review Panels, funding, Foster Home licensing, etc.).
- B) Should the Board of Supervisors desire to have an “ombudsman”, how would this individual or group intervene in an active case and what information could they access and release and to whom?
- C) It may be useful for the Board of Supervisors to ask County Counsel what specific information it can acquire or receive when hearing a report about a child death or child abuse case, whether such acquisition of information is possible under existing confidentiality laws and, if so, in what fashion.
- D) When making a determination about confidentiality, please explain why the media and others can release information publicly about a child abuse or neglect case not involving a child death or near death in circumstances where the Department of Human Services, the Citizen Review Panel and other groups have been told they are not to release any identifying information. (Unfortunately, this divergent approach only adds to the perception that the County is “hiding” behind confidentiality, since the public sees confidential information being released publicly).
- E) What is the relationship between the County and State in licensing foster homes, foster family agency homes and group homes? What role does Community Care Licensing play in Kern County? Where does the ultimate accountability reside?
- F) County Counsel should work with state legislators to make sure that DHS can release to the public information about “near fatalities” as prescribed in federal law.

Board Referral Issue #5:

**How can Kern be more proactive in preventing child deaths and child abuse?
How can we focus current oversight activities to be more prevention-focused?**

CRP Discussion:

There are several opportunities, both existing and potential, that the CRP believes will help strengthen Kern's prevention and early intervention efforts. Existing efforts include:

- The outreach and education services provided by the Kern Child Abuse Prevention Council, as designated by the Board of Supervisors;
- A large network of public and private agencies providing excellent prevention and early intervention services throughout Kern County. (Part of the challenge these agencies face is that it is extremely difficult to measure something that does not happen. Agencies struggle with trying to demonstrate to funders and elected officials how many instances where child abuse at the hands of would-be caregivers does not happen as a result of local prevention services). Kern is continuously recognized for the excellent prevention and early intervention services we have developed. Additionally, Kern's Collaboratives and Family Resource Centers, one of the largest comprehensive networks in the state, helps ensure that these prevention and early intervention services reach all geographic areas of Kern County.
- Kern's Child Death Review Team is positioned to analyze trends in child deaths and make concrete recommendations on how to impact deaths that are preventable.
- California's redesign of the Child Welfare System (CWS Redesign), in development at the state level for the past three years, is currently being rolled out to counties. Kern is a "cohort 3" county, meaning we must do a self-assessment by June and begin designing a new intake structure this year. The state estimates the redesign is a 5-10 year initiative. Its aim is to change the child welfare system completely, from that of a law enforcement model to a prevention and community support model. It should be noted that this will only be accomplished if we are able to think creatively about funding child protection services in Kern County in innovative ways that leverage existing funding sources.

CRP Recommendations:

- 1) The Department of Human Services should study the feasibility of developing a team approach to child protective services. For example, they should examine the feasibility of having teams of social workers and community based agencies that go out together on calls to provide more input into how cases are coded and what the response will be when a child experiences abuse. These teams should be available 24 hours per day in all geographic regions of Kern County. It is the CRP's understanding that currently there is only one person on call evenings and weekends for the entire county.
- 2) Kern Child Abuse Prevention Council and the Kern Child Death Review Team should partner to take a more active role in outreach and prevention education services on a countywide basis. As Kern's designated Child Abuse Prevention Council, the agency should work with the media and public at large to develop a

comprehensive, prevention-focused agenda for the next several years and should report back to the Board of Supervisors at least semi-annually to provide an update about their efforts.

- 3) The Department of Human Services and the Board of Supervisors should use the state's redesign of the Child Welfare System as a catalyst for making child welfare services much more prevention-focused.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



July 27, 2005

Colleen McGauley, Executive Director
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
2000 – 24th Street, Suite 130
Bakersfield, California 93301

Louis Gill, Executive Director
Bakersfield Homeless Center
1600 E. Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, California 93305

Dear Ms. McGauley and Mr. Gill:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the recommendations made by the Kern County Citizen Review Panel (CRP) to the Kern County Board of Supervisors, and later submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in the panel's annual report, were evaluated by CDSS staff for any implications that they might have for statewide policy and for other counties. Members of the Statewide Citizen Review Panel were given the opportunity to review and comment upon these recommendations. A member of the Statewide Panel had comments on the section of the recommendations that is entitled "Recommendations for County Counsel to Research."

After reviewing the County Panel's recommendations and the comments of the Statewide Panel member, CDSS staff will evaluate the feasibility of amending State law so that it is stated explicitly that citizen review panels have access to juvenile court records. The enclosed document contains the Kern County recommendations and the responses by the Statewide Panel member and the CDSS.

Should you have questions, feel free to contact Jacquelyn Sneed at (916) 651-6711 or at Jacquelyn.Sneed@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

GREGORY E. ROSE, Chief
Office of Child Abuse Prevention

Enclosure

c: Terry Foley

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



Recommendations from the Kern County Panel and Responses from the Statewide Panel and CDSS

Recommendations for County Counsel to research:

- G) What specific information can be released about individual cases? Who can disclose such information and to whom may they disclose it? (Note: The CRP believes it is important that, in those areas where the law is “gray”, the positions we take with respect to confidentiality be consistent with the positions of the state and federal government for a variety of reasons – those authorities ultimately have jurisdiction over Citizen Review Panels, funding, Foster Home licensing, etc.).
- H) Should the Board of Supervisors desire to have an “ombudsman”, how would this individual or group intervene in an active case and what information could they access and release and to whom?
- I) What specific information can the Board of Supervisors acquire or receive when hearing a report about a child death or child abuse case, whether such acquisition of information is possible under existing confidentiality laws and, if so, in what fashion?
- J) When making a determination about confidentiality, please explain why the media and others can release information publicly about a child abuse or neglect case not involving a child death or near death in circumstances where the Department of Human Services, the Citizen Review Panel and other groups have been told they are not to release any identifying information.
- K) What is the relationship between the County and State in licensing foster homes, foster family agency homes and group homes? What role does Community Care Licensing play in Kern County? Where does the ultimate accountability reside?
- L) County Counsel should work with state legislators to make sure that DHS can release to the public information about “near fatalities” as prescribed in federal law.

Statewide Panel Response: *The Department received comments from one Statewide Panel member. These comments are summarized below:*

- *The panel’s question regarding access to juvenile court records does not lend itself to a “statewide answer.” The answer will vary from county to county and a number of county court systems have adopted local rules and procedures to cover what can be perceived as gaps in Section 827 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. This has led to different rules and procedures in the various counties*
- *At times rulings, policies and procedures that are applicable to all counties can lead to differing policies, procedures and practices at the local level. For example, there is an AG opinion that concludes that the right to inspect files does not include the right to photo copy them. In counties that strictly follow this opinion (AG opinions are persuasive authority) prosecuting attorneys and police officers need to file 827 petitions. In other places, the officer (or district attorney) will simply file a one page form affidavit and be given copies.*
- *Overhauling the confidentiality statute, W&I Code 827, would be a huge job and the legislature has addressed gaps in the statute by adding exceptions. One of the exceptions made the records of a deceased child accessible except in circumstance where release of the records would be detrimental to another*

child (Section 827 (a)(2). This can lead to a result in which records of the same type of incident will be released (or not) depending on whether the injury suffered is a fatality.

CDSS Comments: *CDSS staff acknowledges the need for each county to establish its own codes, regulations and policies with regard to accessing juvenile court records. At the same time staff will explore the possibility of amending either Section 827 or Section 18973 of the Welfare and Institutions Code so that it is stated in California law that Citizen Review Panels have access to juvenile case files*

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



July 27, 2005

Mary Butler
Chief Probation Officer
2350 Old Sonoma Rd.
Napa, California 94559

Heather Kelly
1418 Sheridan Dr.
Napa, California 94558

Dear Ms. Butler and Ms. Kelly:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the recommendations made by the Napa County Citizen Review Panel (CRP) to the Napa County Board of Supervisors and to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) were sent to the Statewide Citizen Review Panel for its review and comment. These recommendations were also evaluated by CDSS staff to determine whether they have implications for statewide policy or for other California counties.

The Napa panel's recommendations are as follows:

- The State and the Board of Supervisors should fund Child Welfare Services (CWS) services according to the standards found in the SB 2030 study.
- There should be funding for Child Welfare Services System Improvements.
- There should be continued funding for Napa to maintain its accreditation status.

Comments from the Statewide Panel suggest that the future focus of the Napa panel be upon the activities of the local Child Protective Services (CPS) system. The CDSS staff agrees that such a focus is important in a state supervised, county administered program in which the counties deliver services to CWS recipients. County feedback, on local operations and services, is essential in determining the effectiveness of the California program

Should you have any questions or comments regarding any aspect of the review, please feel free to contact Jacquelyn Sneed at (916) 651-6711 or at Jacquelyn.Sneed@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

GREGORY E. ROSE, Chief
Office of Child Abuse Prevention

c: Doug Calkin

July 27, 2005

Julie Lynch, Chairperson
San Mateo County CRP
818 Hensley Ave
San Bruno, California 94066

Dear Ms. Lynch:

The purpose of this letter is to respond to the recommendations made by the San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

The San Mateo Panel recommended that Team Decision Making Meetings be made mandatory each time children:

- Are removed from their homes.
- Change homes in which they have been placed.
- Are reunified with their parents.

This recommendation was reviewed by the California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) staff and it was sent to the Statewide Citizen Review Panel (CRP) members for their review and comment. Comments received from the panel were that it is encouraging to find that Team Decision Making is working in San Mateo County to the point that the local panel recommends that it be incorporated into the County's policies, practices and procedures. CDSS staff recognizes that San Mateo is one of the California counties that participates in the Family to Family Initiative of the Anne E. Casey Foundation and Team Decision Making is one of the four key strategies of this Initiative. CDSS looks forward to the San Mateo Panel's next report and an update on the progress made to expand the use of Team Decision Making.

Should you have questions or comments about this response please contact Jacquelyn Sneed at Jacquelyn.Sneed@dss.ca.gov or at (916) 651-6711.

Sincerely,

GREGORY E. ROSE, Chief
Office of Child Abuse Prevention

c: Judy Knowlton
Pat Brown
Marissa Saludes

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program/Education and Training Vouchers Program

**CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM/EDUCATION AND
TRAINING VOUCHERS PROGRAM
ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT**

Program Contact Person:

Name: Sonya St. Mary
Independent Living Program Policy Unit

Address: California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, M.S. 14-78
Sacramento, CA 95814

Telephone: (916) 651-7465

1. Program Plan Narrative

The CDSS supervises the programs carried out by all 58 California counties and 2) the CDSS agrees to cooperate in national evaluations of the effectiveness of the independent living programs implemented to achieve the purposes specified in the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) State Plan for fiscal years 2005-2009.

IV-B Plan Commitments

Youth participating in the Independent Living Program (ILP) will benefit greatly from newly developed protocols that standardize “Family Engagement” and “Youth Involvement” procedures as part of the case planning process for youth. The CDSS convened the Permanency and Transition Workgroup that included representatives from the 11 pilot counties implementing the CWS System Improvements and CDSS program representatives to draft the protocols in response to Goal 2 (Permanency) and Goal 3 (Well-being) of the CDSS Title IV-B Plan. Implementation of these protocols will greatly enhance the youth case planning process by ultimately reducing the number of foster youth re-entries in out-of-home placements.

a) Help youth make the transition to self-sufficiency:

For the last several years, CDSS has devoted staff and departmental resources to integrate services to foster youth by partnering and collaborating with other public and private agencies. The Foster Youth Employment, Training and Housing Taskforce formerly known as the Governor’s Taskforce on Homelessness under the previous governor, Gray Davis, is an example of the continued successful coordination of goals and activities that benefit foster youth, between the CDSS, Employment Development Department (EDD), Workforce Investment Agencies (WIA), the California Department of

Education (CDE), California Youth Connection (CYC), counties and other community based organizations. Together, these agencies have developed multidisciplinary training opportunities for ILP coordinators, EDD One-Stop Center staff, foster parents and other stakeholders to understand the unique needs of youth in foster care and provided information on services that are available at One-Stop Centers. The CDSS regulations for the ILP and Transitional Housing programs reflect the CDSS' commitment to partnerships by requiring that all foster youth are "registered" at One-Stop Centers and that "counties shall collaborate with other public and private agencies to ensure the availability of core services and shall not duplicate or replace services that are available through other agencies, programs or funding sources." Additionally, this collaboration has resulted in four pilot foster youth employment projects that provided youth with employment opportunities, mentoring, tutoring and housing assistance to support them in their efforts to gain employment skills and a living wage. The four participating counties would like to continue these projects now that the pilot funding has been expended and are seeking other funding sources. The participating counties and the EDD are evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot projects and will report back to the Foster Youth Employment, Training and Housing Taskforce. If effective, counties will be encouraged to implement similar pilots in their counties utilizing local resources and community support.

As a result of the partnership between the CDSS and the EDD, Los Angeles County applied for and received a Department of Labor grant to develop a foster youth demonstration project to help youth who emancipate from the foster care system become employed and self-sufficient. The project will serve over 80 youth who are out-of-school or at risk-of-dropping out in obtaining employment and vocational training services, and align youth with local employers in a mentoring capacity. The grant for this demonstration project totals \$800,000. Funding includes \$400,000 Workforce Investment Act funds, \$200,000 Wagner-Peyser Act Governor 10 percent funds and \$200,000 Los Angeles County CFCIP funds.

The CDSS requires that counties collect statistical data and report on ILP and housing outcomes for youth via the Annual Narrative Report and the SOC 405A report. The Annual Narrative Report provides a description or narrative explanation of data reported in the SOC 405A document. In the narrative report, counties are required to discuss their plans for improving ILP outcomes for youth as well as discuss the challenges faced in providing services based on youth needs and county resources. The CDSS is currently tabulating the data and reviewing the narrative reports for the reporting period of FFY 2003-2004. Once the county information is compiled it will be shared with counties as a method for improving services to youth by sharing county successes. It will also be used as a tool by the Department to provide technical assistance to counties who may have difficulties in the provision of core services to youth. The CDSS has revised the TILP on the CWS/CMS based on the federal outcomes drafted by the Department of Health and Human Services for the CFCIP. Counties via implementation of the TILP and the Annual Narrative Report are expected to design their county ILP in a manner that ensures compliance with the pending federal outcome measures.

To assist counties in implementing the Independent Living Program (ILP), Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) and the Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus) in a consistent manner for all eligible youth, the CDSS implemented ILP regulations on an emergency basis. The regulations were codified effective December 10, 2004. The newly adopted regulations provide the framework for counties to provide core CFCIP services to youth through the Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) while maintaining program flexibility based on regional needs and local resources. The regulations require that the TILP describe the youth's current level of functioning, emancipation goals, programs and services needed by the youth and identify key individuals that may assist the to achieve their TILP goals. The TILP shall be reviewed, updated, approved and signed by the social worker/probation officer and the youth every six months. Inclusion of youth and their families and/or caring adults in the development of the TILP encourages the youth to accept responsibility for their future and empowers them to set meaningful goals and maintain those important lifelong connections. To ensure that the TILP is a thoughtful document, the regulations require that the TILP be included in the case plan. With the implementation of the family engagement and youth involvement protocols, inclusion of the TILP in the case plan ensures that the emancipation planning process will result in better outcomes for youth.

Counties are required to utilize the TILP on the CWS/CMS so the system can be queried to determine the utilization of the system TILP. The State conducts monitoring of various counties through this process to determine the extent of compliance with the requirement to complete a TILP. In the course of that review, it can be determined whether the TILP was developed with the input of the youth, and his or her family members or other caring adults.

A majority of counties report utilization of assessment tools as follows: the majority of counties report the use of the Ansell-Casey Life Skills, a smaller number state the use of the Daniel Memorial and a few counties report utilization of The Community College Foundation's (TCCF) assessment tool.

As an example of how counties are assisting youth to make the transition to self-sufficiency, one county reports that it has convened a youth council: Paying Attention Using Self Evaluation (PAUSE). According to this county's Report, PAUSE consists "... of approximately six emancipated youth... These youth have volunteered to plan and coordinate ILP's Emancipation Support Group, a workshop held every other month that focuses on emancipation topics."

The same county reports that it has an annual campaign to gather useful goods and fill laundry baskets with products that any youth needs as he or she embarks into adulthood. In 2004, over 250 baskets, known as "Emancipation Baskets" were distributed to youth.

b) Help youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment:

Effective January 1, 2004, Assembly Bill (AB) 490, Chapter 862, Statutes of 2003 enhanced the educational rights of foster youth and wards of the court. Key provisions of AB 490 established legislative intent that foster youth are ensured access to the same opportunities to meet academic achievement standards to which all students are held, maintain stable school placements, be placed in the least restrictive educational placement and have access to the same academic resources, services and extracurricular and enrichment activities as all other children. The legislation makes clear that education and placement decisions are dictated by the best interests of the child and there will be a foster care education liaison to ensure proper placement, transfer and enrollment in school for foster youth. The CDE has the responsibility for implementing AB 490. The CDSS had a periphery role in AB 490 which was informing the counties via an All County Information Notice of the passage of AB 490. The CDE website for AB 490 is: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/ab490contacts.asp>.

The CDSS sponsors an Annual Teen Summit that is campus based to provide teens aged 16 to 18 with information on resources available to them once they emancipate from the foster care system. The Summit informs youth of housing, employment and educational opportunities as well as information on Medi-Cal services once they are no longer dependants. Youth are given a tour of the college campus, participate in interactive workshops and hear from youth experts in various disciplines. This is a very popular youth event with an annual attendance of between 200-300 youth. This year, a total of 18 counties sent approximately 200 youth and 50 adult supporters. Overall, the Summit was rated very good to excellent by 86% of the attendees and workshops were rated very good to excellent by 95% of the attendees.

c) Help youth prepare for and enter postsecondary training and educational institutions:

The CDSS maintains a close partnership with the California Student Aid Commission (Commission), TCCF, counties, the Casey Family Programs and the EDD in the administration and outreach efforts of the Chafee Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program. The CDSS has partnered with these organizations to ensure that the Chafee ETV funding is fully expended, monies are distributed to youth in an expeditious manner; that all eligible foster youth receive information regarding the ETV program and that the program is administered in compliance with federal requirements. The Commission provides operational support through an interagency agreement with the CDSS to disseminate ETV grant awards. They reported that over 1,500 youth received amounts up to \$5,000 in the past year. The CDSS is working with the Commission as they are reconfiguring their data base to collect outcome information on grantees. This information will be reported in the next APSR.

All counties receive an allocation to provide ETV outreach to youth so that all eligible foster youth are aware of the opportunities offered by the Chafee ETV program.

The CDSS has also contracted with TCCF to enhance the Chafee ETV program through the addition of the California Chafee ETV E-bus. The CDSS understands that

while it is important to assist youth financially to access the ETV grant funding, it is equally important that youth in receipt of ETV grants are provided with the tools to be successful in post secondary college or training programs. The Chafee E-bus travels Statewide as an outreach tool to sign-up eligible youth for ETV grant awards and other eligible scholarships and grants. Youth who participate in the E-bus workshop receive a “resource bag” filled with information on local resources, sample essays, contacts for supportive services such as housing, employment, tutoring and health care. A bank of internet stations on the E-bus provide youth with the opportunity to search the web, complete a resume or download information that can assist them in their pursuit of postsecondary education and/or training. The E-Bus facilitator, in cooperation with local college guidance offices, may provide youth participants with an academic workshop that disseminates information on college requirements and offers important tips to students on what actions are necessary to stay in school and what student should they have academic difficulties. Youth who participate in the E-bus experience will be given a pre-test and post-test. The CDSS is very excited about the potential of this enhancement to the Chafee ETV and will report the findings of the post-test in the next APSR.

d) Provide personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults:

Now that the ILP Regulations are being implemented, counties are required to include mentoring as a service offered to youth. As reflected in the FFY 2003 – 2004 Annual Narrative Reports submitted by counties, a majority of counties have a mentoring program; some counties have continued to struggle to offer this service to youth on a consistent basis. Counties that have strong mentorship programs effectively utilize mentor organizations such as AmeriCorp, Big Brothers Big Sisters; county developed mentoring programs as well as programs provided by community-based organizations and faith-based institutions. For FFY 2003–2004, the SOC 405A shows that approximately 1,700 youth were participating in the Job Corps or the California Conservation Corps. At this time, the extent to which youth are participating in AmeriCorp is unknown. Once all of the required services as identified in the ILP Regulations are implemented Statewide, the expectation is that all counties will have a mentoring program or mentoring partnership program.

The program previously identified as the California Mentor Initiative, now known as the Governor’s Mentoring Partnership, is overseen by the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP). This Partnership includes the Big Brothers Big Sisters, California Clubhouses Mentoring Program, Friday Night Live and the California Service Corps.

Representatives of the ADP are in the process of identifying qualitative outcomes related to foster youth.

e) Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services for former foster care recipients between 18 years of age and up to the day before their 21st birthday:

The CDSS ILP Regulations require that youth be registered at EDD One Stop Centers so that they are aware of the array of employment services available to them at the time they emancipate from foster care. This requirement went into effect with the implementation of the ILP Regulations.

Many California counties utilize up to 30 percent of their Chafee allocation to provide housing for emancipated foster youth. Given the great need for safe and affordable housing in California, the State has encouraged counties to meet the need of housing for emancipated youth through use of the Chafee dollars and State General Funds allocated as a result of Assembly Bill (AB) 1119, Chapter 639, Statutes of 2002. AB 1119 created the THP-Plus housing program for emancipated foster youth. THP-Plus eligible youth are former foster youth 18 through 20 years old who are pursuing goals outlined in the STEP/THP-Plus TILP. The challenge for counties in using the AB 1119 funding is the requirement of a 60 percent county match. To address this challenge, counties have partnered with community based organizations and housing advocates to address the housing needs of emancipated foster youth through creative funding options. Due to the funding constraints, few counties have developed and implemented the STEP. Counties that have approved THP – Plus Plans are required to provide information, narrative and statistical, regarding the services provided to youth participating in the THP – Plus.

According to the FFY 2003 – 2004 SOC 405A, 481 youth participated in the THP – Plus. As stated previously, the CDSS is currently tabulating the data and reviewing the narrative reports for the reporting period of FFY 2003 - 2004. Once the county information is compiled, it will be shared with counties as a method for improving services to youth by sharing county successes as well as determining the extent to which the Chafee housing funds for youth aged 18 to 21 have been utilized.

As a result of the CDSS partnership with the EDD, foster youth between the ages of 18 through 20 years of age are informed of their eligibility to receive employment and supportive services through the Workforce Investment Act programs and, as previously reported, foster youth are now required to be registered at EDD One-Stop Centers.

g) Room and Board:

There is a great deal of variance among counties in the provision of room and board services to former foster youth between the ages of 18 up to the day before their 21st birthday. The primary methods of providing room and board services are the use of the Emancipated Youth Stipend (EYS), a 100 percent State General Fund allocation and the Chafee ILP allocation. Counties have successfully expended all of the EYS allocation of \$3.6 million to address the special needs of emancipated foster youth particularly room and board expenses. Many counties assist emancipated youth with

room and board expenses through the use of up to 30 percent of their Chafee ILP allocation. Counties are required to report this information in the Annual Narrative Report.

2. Briefly describe how the Independent Living Program is served by political subdivisions in the State.

The CDSS partners with several other California Departments, county agencies, The Community College Foundation, private non-profit foundations and other interested stakeholders to ensure that ILP services are available to all political subdivisions.

a) Other State of California Departments

The CDSS actively collaborates with several other State of California departments on various projects and activities.

The CDE funds and monitors the Foster Youth Services Program (FYS) program. The FYS is the liaison between foster youth and the education system to improve student academic achievement, reduce the incidence of pupil discipline problems and to reduce the incidence of pupil truancy and dropout. In the CDE's 2004 Report to the Governor and Legislature, the Department reports: "Outcome data for the FYS Core District Programs shows that 79 percent of the foster youth served in school year 2002-2003 gained more than one month of academic growth per month of tutoring received. Therefore, the target population objective of 60 percent was surpassed by 19 percent. In addition, only 0.4 percent of foster youth served through FYS Core District Programs were expelled, surpassing the target rate of 5 percent and the foster youth student attendance rate reached 96 percent, exceeding the target attendance rate of 90 percent." The CDE is also working on AB 490 implementation.

The EDD, Workforce Investment Agency, Chancellor's Office, California Probation Officers Association, and the Housing and Community Development participate in the Foster Youth Employment, Training and Housing Workgroup that targets the employment, education and housing needs of foster youth.

The California Student Aid Commission collaborates with the CDSS to administer the Chafee ETV grant program through its relationship with the financial aid offices of colleges statewide.

In July 2004, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) released a new strategic vision for the delivery of youth services under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The goal of the DOL youth vision is that youth programs focus on serving the neediest disadvantaged youth with priority given to out-of-school youth, high school dropouts, runaway and homeless youth, youth in foster care, court involved youth, children of incarcerated parents and migrant youth. The Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) is collaborating with the DOL on several activities including demonstration grants to implement the new shared vision. Los Angeles is one of

several locations nationally to receive a demonstration grant to implement the new vision.

The DOL and the EDD have lead in this endeavor and the CDSS is very supportive of this effort. Collaboration activities are operational nationally, statewide and locally in Los Angeles and include several community partners. The CDSS' commitment to the vision is evidenced by active participation by the Child and Youth Permanency branch chief and her staff on the DOL Youth Vision state/federal team. To track progress in meeting the goals of the DOL Youth Vision, the team has developed a benchmark matrix. State efforts include:

- 1) Securing the support of state leaders, and ultimately the governor's office.
- 2) Updating the existing resource map to share with other State agencies.
- 3) Leveraging funds from State collaborative Team. Workforce and Social Services funded demonstration grants may provide noteworthy practices while Education funded demonstration projects can provide lessons learned.

The CDSS also acts as an intermediary between Los Angeles and the EDD on grant administration issues, and provides technical assistance as required to Los Angeles County regarding program and fiscal matters related to implementing the demonstration grant.

b) Local County Entities:

All 58 California counties have a minimum of one ILP coordinator. Los Angeles County has approximately 17 coordinators. The ILP coordinators serve as the link between foster youth and the services they require to transition successfully from foster care to living on their own. Counties are encouraged to develop and maintain cooperative relationships with other county agencies, such as county mental health departments as well as community based organizations to ensure that youth receive necessary services.

The coordination of local efforts ensures the availability of core services and greatly reduces duplication of effort and resources.

Counties are at the forefront of collaborative efforts with Transitional Living Program grantees. In those counties where TLPs operate, ILP coordinators use them as an additional resource to serve transition age youth.

c) The Private Sector:

The CDSS contracts with TCCF to administer ILPs statewide at over 47 community colleges throughout the State. TCCF is consistently involved with the implementation of several departmental initiatives and has been very effective in providing ILP services to youth statewide.

TCCF also provides training to foster parents. Chafee funds are not used for the purpose of training foster parents.

Other CDSS private sector partners that provide input and assistance on program initiatives include the Casey Family Programs, California Foster Parent Association and the California Youth Connection (CYC).

3) Describe how youth of various ages and at various stages of achieving independence, are to be served:

Youth are served in compliance with the federal and state regulations. The CDSS is promoting that counties provide ILP services in a manner that meet individual youth needs based on an assessment using a nationally recognized tool and completion of the TILP with the youth. There is also departmental emphasis on normalizing the experiences of youth participating in ILP through age appropriate activities.

4) Describe how the State involves the public and private non-profit sectors in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence.

Each year the CDSS conducts an ILP Training Institute to provide training to a wide variety of stakeholders that include county ILP coordinators, program managers, staff from other state agencies and care providers regarding federal and state ILP requirements. Workshops are presented to attendees to highlight “promising practices” and assist them in meeting program compliance and to ensure positive outcomes for foster youth.

The CDSS continues to involve the public and private non-profit sector in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence. The CDSS also involves former foster youth, foundations and non-profits in the development of departmental workgroups such as Redesign, Permanency, Conferences, Regulations and Trainings.

Through its collaborative efforts with various public and private non-profit entities, counties are encouraged to actively outreach to foster Native American youth regarding ILP and transitional housing services. The CDSS also collaborates with Tribal STAR; a community based-organization in receipt of federal grant funding that teaches organizations how to offer services to Native American youth in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner. Tribal STAR project staff is invited annually to conduct a workshop at the CDSS’ ILP training Institute.

Given their low numbers compared to other ethnic groups, Native American youth “proportionally” represent the largest group eligible for ILP services. By working with Tribal STAR staff, the CDSS can better assist counties to recognize how the ILP curriculum that has been developed is not as appropriate for Native American youth as it is for youth of other ethnic backgrounds. Cultural and community customs that are central to the lives of Native American youth are often not recognized or understood by the mainstream culture. The lack of understanding results in denying Native foster

youth participation in highly important ceremonies that are considered crucial throughout their transition to adulthood.

In an effort to become more aware of how the ILP may effectively serve Native American youth, State ILP staff will begin participating in the CDSS' ICWA workgroup that meets quarterly.

Counties are requested to provide the State with information regarding their outreach to Indian youth in foster care in the Annual Narrative Report submitted to the State. Information gleaned from the county narrative reports reflect various degrees of outreach. With this awareness, the State encourages county outreach to Indian youth by promoting workshops at its ILP Institute and presentations at the CWDA/ILP subcommittee meetings. These venues serve a dual purpose in that they reinforce the requirement to ensure fair and equitable treatment of Indian youth in foster care and provide counties with the tools to outreach to tribes in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.

For the last several years, the CDSS has provided funding to the CYC via an annual contract to enable the foster youth advocacy group to train foster youth to be effective spokespersons for foster youth issues and concerns.

Refer to section 1a of this report for additional information.

5) Describe the objective criteria the State uses for determining eligibility for Independent Living Program benefits and services, including the process for developing the criteria:

Federal and State regulations specify the objective criteria for determining ILP eligibility services and benefits. In the year 2000, the Independent Living Program Strategic Planning Group, a committee comprised of representatives of the County Welfare Directors Association, county ILP coordinators, placement agencies, advocacy groups, community groups and foster youth developed the Statewide Standards for the ILP that served as the foundation for the State ILP Regulations adopted on December 10, 2004.

In California, youth eligible for ILP are between 16 years of age up to the day before their 21st birthday, and are either currently in foster care or were in foster care on or after their 16th birthday. California counties also have the option to provide services to 14-15 year old foster care youth.

KinGap youth are eligible for ILP regardless of the age they enter KinGap and are at State-only ILP costs.

6) Describe how the State ensures fair and equitable treatment of benefit recipients.

The CDSS ILP Regulations have been implemented to ensure that services provided to youth are consistent statewide. All regulations and subsequent policies are distributed to counties via All County Letters (ACLs) and All County Information Notices (ACINs). ACLs and ACINs ensure clarity of program requirements and uniformity of application for all program recipients.

With respect to Native American youth, counties are requested to provide the State with information regarding their outreach to Indian youth in foster care in the Annual Narrative Report submitted to the State. Information gleaned from the county Narrative Reports reflect various degrees of outreach. With this awareness, the State encourages county outreach to Indian youth by promoting workshops at its ILP Institute and presentations at the CWDA/ILP subcommittee meetings. These venues serve a dual purpose in that they reinforce the requirement to ensure fair and equitable treatment of Indian youth in foster care and provide counties with the tools to outreach to tribes in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.

Annual Budget Request & Summary

Request for Training and Technical Assistance

Training and Technical Assistance

As noted throughout the APSR, there are some instances in which we believe the State would benefit from the training and technical assistance offered through Region IX, either directly provided by the staff, or through a National Resource Center. Some of these we have noted include the following.

The CDSS will continue to monitor counties' progress on their system improvement plans related to a number of areas, such as safety, concurrent planning, etc. Counties who undergo a peer quality case review may identify issues, such as concurrent planning, in which they would desire technical assistance. We anticipate in the coming year that some counties will request technical assistance from the National Resource Centers through CDSS on a variety of issues. To facilitate these requests, CDSS issued an All County Information Notice outlining the process by which counties could request training and technical assistance.

The CDSS has sought expert guidance in the area of disproportionality. In 2004, the CDSS met with the National Resource Center (NRC) on Permanency and Special Needs Adoptions, which also included Dr. Ruth McRoy, consultant for the NRC for Foster Care and Permanency Planning. Dr. McRoy reviewed information to assess where the State could address the issue of disproportional and improve the foster/adoptive recruitment of families in order to meet the ethnic and racial makeup of children in care. The CDSS has discussed the use of the National Resource Center resources with all counties, and will probably further utilize one of the NRCs on the issue of disproportionality in the coming year.

This year, the State Interagency (Children's) Team (SIT) continued work on a variety of issues. The SIT is charged with looking at many cross-cutting issues for children including supporting CWS System Improvements. One of these issues is confidentiality, and technical assistance through the National Resource Centers (NRCs) on this issue may be requested.

The CDSS continues negotiations of a Tribal/State agreement with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and has begun negotiations with the Karuk Tribe. As questions come up in regards particularly to funding issues, we will need to seek technical assistance from Region IX to facilitate these agreements. In addition, to assist tribes in developing social services plans, we may be seeking training and technical assistance from an NRC.

Glossary

Glossary

10-Largest Counties

The 10 counties which, in aggregate, contain 60% of the child welfare services caseload in California. These counties are: Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Mateo.

Consolidated Home study

Our current system licenses foster parents, and if a foster parent decides that they wish to adopt a foster child they have in their home, a separate process called an adoptive home study is completed. The consolidated home study is a one time study that would certify families for foster care and/or adoption, and would facilitate concurrent planning.

Differential Response

Differential Response is a new intake structure that responds differentially to all the referrals of child abuse and neglect made to county hotlines/intake in order to support families and reduce the number of placements of children in out-of-home care. Each referral will be evaluated in terms of statutory definitions for child welfare system (CWS) involvement for immediate safety considerations; for the choice of a response time for the initial face to face interview and for the path of response. Some referrals will be screened out as not appropriate for CWS. Others will be referred to a community network of response (after permission from the parents/caretakers is granted), and still other referrals will be opened for CWS face to face assessment.

Some CWS face to face assessments will be done without anticipating court involvement, but with the expectation that the family will be engaged to participate in services to protect the children and strengthen parental protective capacity as well as child and family well-being. Some initial assessments will be handled by CWS alone, and some by a team including CWS and partner agencies from the community. The purpose of this initial assessment is to understand what is going on within the family, what has to be done immediately to assure child safety and to engage the family in services to support parenting responsibilities. All families not screened out will receive a comprehensive assessment as to their needs. This may be done by the community network of services and supports or by CWS – alone or in partnership with team members.

Fairness and Equity In the Child Welfare Services System

Fairness and Equity in the child welfare services system is characterized by:

- Families whose children enter foster care who are treated the same regardless of race or ethnicity;
- children's lengths of stay in foster care are not related to their race or ethnicity;
- children's rates of reunification with their birth families are the same regardless of race or ethnicity; and
- services are culturally competent and available in the languages of the families served.

The Family to Family Initiative

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, in consultation with community leaders and child welfare practitioners nationwide, developed a reform initiative called Family to Family. Family to Family was designed in 1992 and has now been field tested in communities across the country, including Alabama, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland.

The Family to Family Initiative provides an opportunity for communities to better screen children being considered for removal from home, to determine what services might be provided to safely preserve the family and/or what the needs of the children are; be targeted to bring children in congregate or institutional care back to their neighborhoods; involve foster families as team members in family reunification efforts; become a neighborhood resource for children and families and invest in the capacity of communities from which the foster care population comes; and provide permanent families for children in a timely manner.

Family to Family is comprised of four core strategies: Recruiting, Training and Supporting Resource Families; Building Community Partnerships; Team Decision Making; and Self Evaluation. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's role has been to assist states and communities with a portion of the costs involved in both planning and implementing innovations in their systems of services for children and families, and to make available technical assistance and consultation throughout the process. The Foundation also provided funds for development and for transitional costs that accelerate system change. The states, however, have been expected to sustain the changes they implement when Foundation funding comes to an end.

Counties in California presently participating in the Family to Family Initiative are: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus, Tehama, Trinity and Ventura.

Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCR)

The PQCR is an extension of the county's self assessment process and is guided by questions raised by the analysis of outcome data and systemic factors.

The goal of the PQCR is to analyze specific practice areas and to identify key patterns of agency strengths and concerns for the host county. The PQCR process uses peers from other counties to promote the exchange of best practice ideas within the host county and to peer reviewers. The peer reviewers provide objectivity to the process and serve as an immediate onsite training resource to the host county.

Pilot Counties

The 11 pilot counties that volunteered to implement the child welfare system improvements (Standardized Safety Assessment System, Differential Response and Permanency and Youth Transitions). These counties are Contra Costa, Glenn, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Placer, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Stanislaus, Tehama and Trinity.

Risk, Safety and Needs Assessments

After the initial face to face assessment, there will be subsequent meetings with the family to do a comprehensive assessment of strengths and needs, parental protective capacity, ongoing risks, and continued review of safety plans. If safety is a continuing concern and the case is being handled by the community network, the agency will re-refer the case to CWS. The nature of the case plan that emerges from the comprehensive assessment will differ based on what has to be done to assure safety, what the goals are for the case, and who should be involved in promoting the necessary changes within the family. The tools for the comprehensive assessment will apply for both in-home and out-of-home cases.

Safety assessments will be done at multiple times during the life of a case. The first face to face assessment will be done when direct information is gathered as to the current safety and risk. Based on this initial assessment, safety plans will be put into place immediately, as needed. By gathering information as to the concerns about the protection of the child, by exploring the protective capacity of the parents, and by preliminarily identifying needs for services, the worker will address risk. As the case moves forward to comprehensive assessment and service planning, a more thorough understanding will be obtained of family strengths and needs, as well as changes that must be made to assure the ongoing safety and protection of the child. Services and resources will be evaluated as to their effectiveness in reducing risk and in making an impact towards the needed changes. Decisions on case closure will also address safety, risk, and whether necessary changes to assure child safety have been made.

Team Decision-Making

A meeting of key stakeholders in the child's case specifically used to determine placement decisions. The meetings are always facilitated by a trained facilitator.